A PLAINE AND FAMILIAR EXPOSITION OF THE Ninth and Tenth Chapters of the Prouerbs of *Salomon.*

MATTH. 13.35.

I will open my mouth in Parables, and will vtter the things which haue been kept secret from the foundation of the world.



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A PLAIN AND FAMILIAR EXPOSITION OF THE Ninth and Tenth Chapters of the Revelation.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFVLL, SIR ANTONIE COPE, KNIGHT, GRACE, MERCIE, AND peace be multiplied.

SIr, your louing acceptance of our former treatiſe, together with the good entertainment which it hath found with manie Chriſtian Readers, hath much encouraged vs to dedicate this alſo to your fauourable patronage. We are now more willing to make ſome worke for the Preſſe, becauſe we haue no imployment in the Pulpit. And who knoweth, but that others (whom God hath graced with farre greater ſufficiencie) may be ſtirred vp hereby, to publiſh ſome of their godly meditations? that as their faithfull labours were formerly like pure fountaines, which did only refreſh their particular congregations: ſo now, by meanes of printing, they may be made like great and comfortable riuers, to water the whole Land.

And whereas we and our families haue plentifullie taſted of your goodnes and mercy, we thought it our bounden duties to manifeſt our vnfained thankfulneſſe for the ſame; that other Patrons may bee mooued, by

your example, to ſhew the like compaſſion to their diſtreſſed Miniſters, that you haue done to vs and ours. If the ſucceſſe fall out according to our hope, wee purpoſe (by Gods aſſiſtance) to proceede further in this booke of the prouerbs, in the ſame method which is here already begun: if otherwiſe, yet this is our comfort, that it hath been, and is our continual care, and hearts deſire, to keep a good conſcience, and to recompenſe our preſent ſilence with the beſt ſeruice that we are able to performe vnto the Church. The God of all mercie and comfort, multiplie his gracious bleſſings vpon you more and more; and graunt all peace and proſperitie to all thoſe that faithfully loue and ſeeke the peace of the Church, and the proſperitie of the Goſpell.

Your VVorſhips, in all Chriſtian

duties to be commanded.

Iohn Dod, Robert Cleaue-

To the Christian Reader.

THe wisedome of God, who best knoweth euerie mans affections, doth testifie, that such as are full, doe loath an hony combe: but to them that are hungrie, euen bitter things become sweete. *That which is very good, yea precious, and desired of the best, is distasted of such as regard not instruction: but that which is good at all, though meane, and despised of the most, is sauourie to such as soundly seeke saluation. The perswasion whereof hath incouraged vs to bring forth our prouision, and to set before thee such food as God hath inabled vs to prepare. We rest assured of thy Christian loue towards vs, and prouidence for thine owne soule, that thou wilt be more affected with the matter of this treatise (being, as wee hope sound, and without corruption) then offended with the manner thereof, being homely, and without elegancie. As in expounding this Scripture to our owne flocks, we respected the capacitie of our vnlearned hearers: so in publishing the same to others, we tender the profit of the simplest readers. And as for them that are iudicious, and godly learned, we presume that their owne knowledge, and the reading of more excellent discourses, will minister wisdome, to make their vse of this slender worke; as this worke will giue them occasion to esteeme the better of more excellent discourses. Wee haue thought good to chuse these two*

chapters

chapters to begin with, though almost in the middest of the booke, that we might propose to thee a paterne of the exposition of both sorts of parables, as well of such as are set downe in forme of a treatise, and continued discourse, as of those which are for the most part single sentences. If thou shalt iudge, that there may be any fruit of these trauels, we are minded, if God will, to explicate the rest; but by parts, and at seuerall times, and not all entirely together. Now in reading of this obserue that the reasons and vses of the points are not inferred vpon the allegations, or amplifications, immediatly going before, but depend vpon the propositions, which are the doctrines raised out of the seuerall verses: And into them are we compelled to enter abruptly without any precedent introduction to leade vs, lest we should either wearie our selues in seeking varietie of preambles, or wearie thee with innumerable tautologies and repetitions.

The God of mercie graunt thee that grace which we can but wish thee; and by the efficacie of his Spirit, worke in thine heart the vertue and power of this his holy word, which we can only by tongue and penne declare vnto thee. Amen.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE NINTH CHAPTER OF THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER IX.

THis Chapter doth containe a briefe recapitulation or ſummary almoſt of all the former eight Chapters: containing, Firſt, the holy inſtructions of wiſedome, in the perſon of a Princeſſe or great Ladie making a banquet. Secondly, the deceiueable and entiſing flatterings of ſinfulneſſe and folly, in the perſon of a ſmooth and guilefull harlot.

Verſ. 1. *Wiſdome hath built her houſe, and hewen out her ſeuen pillars.*

WIſdome, or *wiſedomes*] *viz.* The moſt abſolute and ſoueraigne Wiſdome, the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is the perfect wiſdome of his father, *(hath built her houſe)* that is, the Church, which is ſo called, 1. Tim. 3. 15. *(and hewen out her ſeuen pillars)* that is, hath moſt firmely founded, and perpetually ſupporteth it with his owne hand: which is more powerfull for it, than many pillars and buttreſſes are to ſuſtaine a materiall building: whereby alſo is intended, that the Churches ſafetie is accompanied with beautie, as hauing pillars hewen out and poliſhed, and not made of rough ſtones without garniſhing.

Doct.1. All true wiſedome is in Gods word.

Wiſedome,&c.] All true wiſedome is contained in the holy word of God. Hee nameth not power, iuſtice, truth or mercie, though theſe be alſo there in fulneſſe, but wiſdome in this caſe taketh the firſt place, and ſhineth out in greateſt brightneſſe: In regard whereof the Apoſtle with a kinde of inſultation doth expoſtulate with worldly men, *Where is the wiſe? where is the Scribe? hath not God made the wiſedome of this world fooliſhneſſe?* that is, whatſoeuer policie or reaſon doth compare with the wiſdome of the Spirit, or is repugnant to it, or not ſanctified by it, that the Lord in word reproueth, and in deede confoundeth.

1.Corin.1.

Reaſons 1. Firſt, it ouermatcheth and ouerthroweth all the craft of cunning men, and the ſubtiltie of Satan himſelfe: for whatſoeuer plots or practiſes of miſchiefe he hath ſeemed moſt to preuaile in, haue alwaies turned to the ruine of his owne kingdome: and albeit he ſuggeſt new temptations, and raiſe vp new errors, and deuiſe ſinnes of new faſhions, yet the Scriptures are euermore readilie appointed with new arguments to repell them.

2 Secondlie, it is the fountaine, from whence is deriued all ſound vnderſtanding, without which no man can attaine to true wiſedome: it ſharpeneth the wit of the moſt ſillie and ignorant, and addeth to the knowledge of the moſt iudicious and learned.

Chap.1.4.5.

Vſe 1. Reproofe of them that condemne Gods holy ordinances of follie, and be aſhamed of the practiſe and profeſſion of them: but as for the inuentions of fleſh and bloud, the ſayings of men, and the painted ſhewes of humane wit, thoſe they haue in high admiration.

2 Inſtruction to renounce and put off our owne carnall reaſon, and to be directed only by the commandements and counſels of God in the Scriptures. For ſo himſelfe requireth, Chap.3.5,6. ſaying: *Truſt in the Lord with all thine heart, and leaue not vnto thine owne wiſedome. In all thy waies acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy waies.*

3 Conſolation againſt the crafty heads of ſubtile foxes, which goe about to circumuent poore ſimple and harmeleſſe Chriſtians:

ans if wee can pray againſt their practiſes, as *Dauid* did, their purpoſes and counſels ſhall be turned into follie as *Achitophels* was.

Built her houſe, &c.] It belongeth onely to Chriſt, both to build and beautifie the Church. Which cauſed *Dauid* though he was King, and ſeemed to haue the whole diſpoſing of the matter in his owne hand, yet to intreat the Lord to ſhew mercie to Sion, and to build vp the walles of Ieruſalem: that is, to prouide for the ſafety, increaſe, and good eſtate of the godly. If no man, no not *Salomon* bee able by his induſtrie to build an earthly familie, much leſſe can any erect a Church which is Gods ſpirituall habitation. And to this purpoſe tends all that is heere aſcribed to wiſedome, her houſe, her pillars, her victuals, her wine, her table, her maids: that is, Chriſt his ſpirituall houſe, protection, feaſt and meſſengers. For notwithſtanding the Miniſters be men and not ſpirits, yet their function is ſpirituall, and not humane.

Doct. 2. Chriſt onelie is the builder and beautifier of the Church. Pſalm. 51. 18. Pſalm. 127. 1.

Firſt, hee alone hath the diſpoſing of the word, vouchſafing it to ſome, and denying it to others, according to his own will, as he teſtifieth in ỹ Pſalmes: *He ſheweth his word vnto Iacob, his ſtatutes, and his iudgements vnto Iſrael. He hath not dealt ſo with any nation, neither haue they knowne his iudgements.* Secondly, no man nor meanes can be ſufficient to make ſufficient Miniſters, vnleſſe he both furniſh and ſend them foorth. For (ſaith the Scripture) *How ſhall they preach vnleſſe they be ſent?* Rom. 10. 15. Thirdly, his Spirit conuerteth mens ſoules, and begetteth them to euerlaſting life, and ſo they become ſtones of this building. For were not the Word made mightie and effectuall by him, Satan would keepe his hold againſt the Preachers, and proud hearts would neuer be brought into ſubiection. For as the Apoſtle ſaith: *The weapons of our warfare are not carnall, but mightie through God, to caſt downe ſtrong holds:* 2. Corinth. 10. 4.

Reaſon 1. God giues his word where he will. Pſalm. 147. 19. 20.

2

3

So far as we wiſh wel to the Church, let vs by prayers to God procure the welfare thereof. Whereunto the Prophet admoniſheth all godly men, ſaying, *Pray for the peace of Ieruſalem: let them proſper that loue thee.* And this was practiſed by *Daniel*, *Nehemiah*,

Vſe 1. Pſalm. 122. 6.

Nehemiah and others, notwithstanding the great account they were in with their Princes.

2 Reproofe of Papists and others that resist God in his worke, attempting to plucke downe that which hee hath set vp: as to hinder the encrease of Christians, to stop the passage of the Gospell, and as much as in them is, to restraine the course of all Christianitie: who as they walke in the steps of their brother *Elymas*, so may they looke for the like successe with him, Act.13.10.

3 Consolation, that the case of the Church were not desperate, though it should come to passe, that men either durst not, or would not, or could not promote religion, or protect such as professe it: for Christ will not faile of his faithfulnesse, as hee is no way disappointed of his helpe. For his sufficiencie is in himselfe, and the worke belongeth to himselfe, and hee will neuer desist from it, vntill it bee accomplished.

Isai.59.16.

Doct.3. Christians only are in safety. Psal.1.4.

Seuen pillars.] The best way for good safetie is to become a faithfull Christian. Of such the Prophet speaketh, Psal.125.1. *They that trust in the Lord, shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be remoued.* Wicked men be like to chaffe or dust that hath no stabilitie, but is easily driuen by the winde into puddles and all other filthie places, without any resistance: but it is as easie to ouerturne a great mountaine, as to ouerthrow the hope and good estate of the godly.

Reason 1. First, his tender care is continually watchfull for their safety, as the eye and wings of the henne are alwaies ready to succour her young ones, Psalme 91.5. and neerer are they to him, then the chickens to their damme; as being members of his owne bodie, and the very apple of his eye: Zach.2.8.

2 Secondly, his power is alwaies exercised for their preseruation: which was figured by the two brasen pillars in the Temple, the one called *Iachin*, that is, the Lord will establish, and the other *Boaz*, that is, In him is strength: both these conioyned doe make the safetie of his seruants complete. If he had power, and not applied it for our helpe, our case were nothing the better: if he should set himself to vphold vs and faile of power,

1.Kings 7.21.

we

we could not ſtand, and therefore they were aſſured by theſe ſignes both of the one and the other.

Thirdly, it concerneth him in equitie, to ſtand for his owne people, that haue caſt themſelues vpon him, and labour in his ſeruice; eſpecially he giuing warrantize for their ſafety, vndertaking that his *truth ſhall be his ſhield and buckler:* Pſal. 91. 4. 3

Obiect. But they are wronged and ſpoiled, and ſometimes alſo killed.

Anſw. Gods prouidence doth not free vs from troubles, but preſerue vs in them: for then it is moſt ſeaſonable. Wiſedome did foreſee that there would bee aſſaults: elſe why did ſhe make her caſtle ſo ſtrong? But this is the happie eſtate of Chriſtians, that though they bee perſecuted, yet they bee not forſaken: and though they bee ſlaine, yet not ouercome; becauſe the loue of God remaineth with them, and a bleſſed reward is prepared for them.

Reproofe of feareſull perſons which haue no courage for the truth, that dare not ſhew themſelues in any good cauſe, which may procure diſpleaſure, nor exerciſe thoſe ſeruices which are neceſſarie for their ſaluation. *Vſe* 1.

Secondly, terror for perſecutors and ſuch as oppoſe themſelues againſt godly Chriſtians: they ſet themſelues to beate downe Gods houſe vpon his head, to hew out the ſtones, and digge downe the walles; to plucke downe the timber from off the rooſe: and they imagine that there is neither difficultie nor danger in this attempt, but that they may eaſilie and with impunitie effect their purpoſe. But howſoeuer they eſteeme it a cottage that ſtandeth on rotten props, they ſhall finde it a caſtle that ſtandeth on mightie pillars: and if it ſtand, they ſhall fall. And looke how much ſafetie is to the houſe, and them that bee in it; ſo much perill is to the enemies and them that aſſault it: for hee is not onelie a wall of defence round about his people, but a wall of fire to conſume their enemies: Zach. 2. 5. 2

Thirdly, conſolation: though the enemies of the Church be neuer ſo many or mightie, yet doth it ſtand ſtill impregnable and inuincible: *the gates of hell*, that is, the power of all the Diuels Matth. 16. 18. 3

Diuels ſhall not preuaile againſt it. And ſuch is the ſafetie of euery particular Chriſtian, both for ſoule and bodie. For if one ſtone could be caſt downe, the whole building might bee demoliſhed.

Verſ.2. *She hath killed her victuals, mingled her wine, and prepared her table.*

Doct.1. MEntion was made before of wiſedomes houſe, and the ſtrength of it; and here of her hoſpitalitie and houſekeeping in it; where heauenly things are repreſented by earthlie, and the bountie and magnificence of the Lord, by the plentifull prouiſion of a liberall feaſt-maker. For the graces of his Spirit, by the miniſterie of the word, are compared to daintie meates, and delicious wines, either ſpiced, or mingled with choice kinds of coole waters, whereby in thoſe hot countries they were much refreſhed. Whereunto is added the circumſtance of readineſſe; that there needeth no tariance or long waiting, but all things are in order, and commodiouſlie prepared for the preſent refection of the gueſts.

The ſoules foode is the beſt fare. *Killed her victuals, &c.*] The beſt cheere is that which is made for the ſoule in Gods houſe: which is declared by diuers circumſtances in the parable of the great feaſt, Mat.22.2.3. As, that it was made by a King; and therefore not common, but coſtly according to his royall ſtate and greatneſſe: and was alſo a wedding feaſt; which is vſually great and full of ſolemnitie: and made at the mariage of his owne ſonne; which conſequently would cauſe it to be much more ſumptuous and magnificent, then if it had been for a ſeruant or kinſman, or ordinarie perſon. By all which is meant the Goſpell, wherein euerie faithfull man is feaſted, and made Gods ſonne, and maried to Chriſt himſelfe.

Reaſon 1. One reaſon to proue this doctrine, is the reſemblance and agreement that is betweene the ſpirituall ſoode and corporall meates: that is, delightfull to the ſoule as they be to the ſenſe: that reuiueth the afflicted and troubled conſcience, as they refreſh the ſpirits of a faint and feeble perſon; and addeth increaſe

creaſe of ſtrength and ſtature to the inward man, as they doe to the outward.

Another reaſon is the differences that are betweene them, wherein this heauenly and celeſtiall banquet doth farre ſurmount the earthly. Firſt, this only is perpetuall, day and night, through the whole yeere, and whole life, and at death and euermore: whereas all other are but for a few daies, and commonly not for many houres. Secondly, heere is no ſurfet or danger by exceſſe, though we continue eating and drinking vnceſſantly without intermiſſion; which is contrary in corporall repaſts. Thirdly, that is a durable meate, and doth miniſter an abiding nouriture, that hee that hath once digeſted it, ſhall neuer after periſh by hunger. Fourthlie, this doth not onely ſuſtaine life for a time, but giue it, and preſerue it for euer. Fifthly, whereas all other meates, and drinkes, though neuer ſo plentifull, are onely for the bellie, and helpe againſt nothing but the preſent hunger and thirſt; this bringeth with it ſafetie, wealth, dignitie, and all happineſſe. Sixthly and laſtly, heere is open houſe kept continuallie for all commers, nations, ages, and ſtates, without any diſparagement to the greateſt, or contempt of the meaneſt: none is excluded that is willing to be admitted: none is vpbraided for comming too often, the more they frequent the houſe, the more they ſhall be made of, and the better welcome. 2

Confutation of ſuch as ſtand vpon the merit of man for ſaluation: all the grace we partake of, is beſtowed vpon vs at *Wiſdomes* royall feaſt; and that is frank and free, and from his owne goodneſſe. Great perſonages, eſpeciallie Princes, vſe not to take a ſhot when they haue giuen entertainment. *Vſe* 1.

Inſtruction, that we come to the word and Sacraments and all the holy ordinances of God, as an hungrie man to a good feaſt, with a willing minde, a large deſire, a good appetite, and a certaine expectation to be ſatisfied. 2 Iſai. 55. 1.

Conſolation for poore Chriſtians, that finde ſuch plentie of ſpirituall prouiſion in Gods houſe, though they feele penurie of earthly things in their owne. For the fruition of the greater doth counteruaile the want of the leſſe: and the comfortable 3

ble refreshings of the soule, will make men more patiently to endure the distresses of the bodie: whereof *David* had experience in his troubles. For his soule thirsting after God (notwithstanding hee was in a barren and drie wildernesse without water) was yet satisfied as with marrow and fatnesse: Psalme 63.15.

Doct.2. *Mingled her wine,* &c.] It is not the wit of man, but the wisedome of God that doth make the ministery of the word comfortable. This doth hee assume to himselfe in a peculiar manner, saying: *I create the fruite of the lippes to be peace.* It is as proper to him to giue peace by the preaching of the word, as to giue being and forme to a creature; or to take away the corruption and punishment of sinne. Else what need had *David* to call vpon him to make him heare of ioy and gladnesse? If it had been in mans power, hee might haue commanded it at his subiects hands; and the Priests and Prophets would haue thought it a preferment to be admitted to that seruice: but hee knew it was no more possible for the best qualified of them to remoue his sorrow without Gods blessing, then for a surgeon to cure a wound with his white hand, without a plaister.

Isai.57.19. Gods wisedome, not mans wit, makes the word comfortable.

Psal.51.8.

Reasons 1. First, ioy is a fruit of the spirit: Gal.5.22. Secondly, to giue true comfort is to *speake to the heart, and to assure it of the pardon of all iniquitie:* Isai.40.1. True it is that men may be the instruments of both these, but the authors of neither.

2

3 Thirdly, it is seene by wonted experience, that they which haue the finest wits, the greatest arts, and sweetest tongues (not guided by the counsell of God) are lesse profitable in their Ministrie then men of meaner parts, bringing onely the power of the word and spirit in their doctrine, as the fruitlesse teaching of the false Prophets declareth, Ierem.23.31.32. Whom *Ieremie* complaineth of and threatneth in the name of the Lord, saying: *I will come against the false Prophets, which haue sweete tongues: whom I sent not, nor commanded, and therfore they bring no profit to this people.*

Vse 1. Reproue of such Ministers, as iudge it a base thing to content themselues with the plaine simplicitie of Scriptures, but powder

der their doctrine with the dust of mens deuises, and authorities. Secondly, of such hearers as depend vpon the persons of the preachers, esteeming so farre of the sermon, as the minister is graced with outward ornaments; and according to that rule they measure all the doctrine that is deliuered: and so many times they thinke good wine to bee harsh, because it is brought in a pewter flagon, and vineger very pleasant, because it is brought in a siluer goblet.

Terror to them that distaste all kind of sincere teaching: the more Christ dealeth with it, the more they loath it, nothing is so offensiue vnto them as the mixture he maketh: they more abhorre it then gall and wormewood. 2

Prepared her table.] Gods fauour and grace is alwaies readie to be found when it is faithfully sought. Our faith can neuer take him tardy in desiring that at the present which hee cannot giue till hereafter, or in being before hand to demand that which his ability is behind hand to performe. The messengers say not in the Gospel, Be there at such a time, and in the meane while, things shal be prepared, or, Go with me now, and dinner will be ready anon; but Come, for all things are now readie. *Doct.* 3. They that faithfully seeke Gods fauour, doe surely find it.

The first cause is in respect of God himself, whose prouident care hath foreseene what things would be expedient, and his power so sufficient to supply all wants, that there cannot be the least defect for any one moment. Secondlie, in respect of his Church and children, whose state doth as much require continuall grace, as the light of a lampe hath needs of oyle to maintaine it. Luke 14.17. *Reasons* 1. 2

Confutation of their impious error, that think the word and Sacraments containe only emptie shewes of happines long to come in another world, and nothing present, but drie and withered promises. What is this, but to charge God to be a deceiuer, and being void of al mercy and fidelity, to starue his people? We would deeme him a miserable master, or householder, that hauing corne and store of prouision in present, should yet keep his familie fasting, and feede them onely with a bare hope of haruest to come. The Scripture teacheth it not to bee agreeable to mercie to put off our needie neighbour till to morrow, *Vse* 1. Chap. 3. 28.

when we haue wherewith to relieue him to day: and certaine it is, that the Lord doth not require more iuſtice and compaſſion of his creatures, then himſelfe wil ſhew his owne children. But thoſe men find the caſe to bee ſo: they ſpeake by experience, they neuer got any good by comming to ſuch exerciſes. It is like to be true: but why? they came not as friends, but as ſpies, and ſpies will be eſpied out, and turned away empty. The comforts of the word and ſpirit be prepared for them that loue God: 1. Cor. 2. 9.

2 Inſtruction, that if we at any time faile of good ſucceſſe in the ſeruices of God, that we impute it to our ſelues, and not lay the blame vpon his ordinances: they were not barren of vertue and power, but we were wanting in faith or repentance, or in performance of ſome ſuch duties, whereby wee ſhould haue been better prepared.

3 Conſolation, that if we feele want of any grace, or of power againſt any ſinne, it is neuer out of ſeaſon to ſeeke ſupplie, we ſhall be ſure to preuaile whenſoeuer wee faithfully labour for it, and that as God hath grace alwaies readie for vs in this life, ſo is his glorie and bleſſednes from euerlaſting prepared for vs in the life to come. And to the poſſeſſion thereof our Sauiour will ſolemnlie call vs at the laſt day, ſaying, *Come yee bleſſed of my Father: inherit yee the Kingdome prepared for you from the foundations of the world.* Matth. 25. 34.

Verſ. 3. *Shee hath ſent foorth her Maides, and crieth vpon the higheſt places of the citie.*

IN the former words was ſhewed what preparation wiſdom made for her feaſt at home, and in theſe what courſe ſhee taketh to inuite the gueſts abroad. Her maides are ſent forth as meſſengers into the ſtreets, and gates and market place, which commonlie are frequented with greateſt multitude and concourſe of people, to call as many as they can meete with: not that maides or matrons or any women are allowed to be miniſters: but hee proſecuteth the allegory, euery part of it correſpondent and ſutable to other. As Chriſt himſelfe, vnderſtood by

by wisdome, is compared to a Ladie: so his Prophets, Apostles, Pastors, and Teachers, are resembled to maides, which in regard of sex are most meet to wait vpon women.

God in his wisdome hath appointed that they that wil come to saluation, must be brought to it by the ministery of his messengers. So the Apostle teacheth, that *all things are of God, which hath reconciled vs vnto himselfe by Iesus Christ, and hath giuen to vs* (saith he) *the ministery of reconciliation*: the father of his owne goodnesse hath vouchsafed to be at one with vs: he hath appointed his Son to make the peace, and his Word to declare the performance of it by the Sonne, and his Ministers to publish it by warrant of his Word. *Doct.* 2. The ministerie of the word the meanes of saluation by Gods ordinance. 2. Cor. 5. 8.

Firſt, Christ hath substituted them to bee his deputies, and still doth speake to his people by them. Saint *Paul* doth boldly professe for the iustifying of his ministry, assuring the Corinthians that God was in Christ, and reconciled the world to himselfe, not imputing their sinnes vnto them, and hath committed to vs, saith hee, the word of reconciliation. Now then are we Embassadors for Christ: as though God did beseech you through vs, we pray you in Christ his stead, that ye bee reconciled to God. *Reason* 1. 2. Cor. 5. 19. 20.

Secondlie, our necessitie is such as doth require the helpe of their ministerie: for wee haue no inclination of our selues to come to this feast, vnlesse wee be sent for: many are readie to presse to corporall banquets, where they haue neither calling nor countenance, but be many times repelled that they cannot get in, or extruded and turned out at the doores before they be satisfied: but to this commeth none without bidding, nor vsually without much vrging.

Thirdlie, the Lord doth so highlie esteeme of their seruice, and so farre obserue them that reiect their counsels and holy instructions, that they that will not be directed to euerlasting life by them, shall neuer attaine vnto it without them. 2

For they that were inuited to the feast, and refused to come when the messengers called them, were threatned by the Lord himselfe, *that they should neuer taste of his supper*: Luk. 14. 24.

Instruction to be teachable and tractable to their perswasi-

ons, ſo farre as they bring their meſſage from their maſter, and cal vs from the poiſon of our owne ſinfulnes, to the wholeſome foode of wiſedomes feaſt. *Who is among you,* ſaith *Iſaias, that feareth the Lord? let him heare the voice of his ſeruant: he that walketh in darkeneſſe, and hath no light, let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay vpon his God.*

2 Reproofe of ſuch as account them vnneceſſarie and vnprofitable, and thruſt vpon the people as a trouble, burthen, and charge vnto them: who many times both deſpiſe their doctrine, and perſecute their perſons: Matth. 22. 6.

3 Conſolation for ſuch as haue them in ſingular loue for their worke ſake, dealing kindlie with the miniſters and taking the benefit of their miniſtery: the kindneſſe they ſhew is accepted, as done to Chriſt, and the promiſes they receiue bee as ſolide and ſure, as if they were deliuered by Chriſt.

Doct. 2. Chriſt would haue the Goſpell openly taught, that all might be inſtructed. Rom. 1. 13. 14.

Chriſt Ieſus hath appointed the preaching of the Goſpell to be moſt publike, that all might be inſtructed by it. This moued the Apoſtle to bee ſo induſtrious in his function, and deſirous euery where to preach, both to the Iewes and Gentiles. It was his bounden dutie ſo to do: he did owe them that ſeruice: the Lord bequeathed vnto them the miniſterie of ſaluation, and made him an executor of his will, and therefore he was in their debt, vntill he had diſcharged it.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, all the doctrine of God is perfectly true, and will hold out at the triall: the more it commeth into the light to be looked vpon, the more it will be iuſtified, to the glorie of the Author, the clearing of the miniſters, and ſaluation of the faithfull hearers.

2 Secondly, his goodneſſe is ſuch *that he would haue no man to periſh, but would all men to come to repentance:* 2 Pet. 3. 9.

3 Thirdly, he hath ordained it to be neceſſary and effectual for the ſaluation of all ſorts of people. And therefore it is called *the grace of God, that bringeth ſaluation to all men:* Tit. 2. 11.

4 Fourthly, it is for the rebuke of ſinfull men: *Crie aloud,* ſaith the Lord to the Prophet, *Spare not: lift vp thy voice like a trumpet, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſion, and to the houſe of Iacob their ſinnes.* So likewiſe it is for the comfort of godly men. For

whoſe

whoſe ſake the Lord calleth vpon faithfull miniſters, ſaying: *O thou that bringeſt good tidings to Sion, get thee vp into the high mountaine: O thou that bringeſt good tidings to Ieruſalem, lift vp thy voice with ſtrength: lift vp, bee not afraid: ſay vnto the cities of Iuda, behold your God.* And finally ſerueth for the edification of all men. Rom.1 6.26.

Reproofe of Ieſuites, Seminaries, and Brownifts, which delight to creepe into corners. Secondly, of ignorant and inſufficient miniſters, which neuer dwelt in wiſdomes family, nor receiued any meſſage from her, and therfore are vtterly vnable to declare her mind. *Vſe* 1.

Verſ.4. *Who ſo is ſimple let him come hither, and to him that is deſtitute of wiſedome ſhe ſpeaketh.*

HEre is a deſcription of the gueſts that bee meete for this feaſt, which in ſhew ſeeme moſt vnmeet, as being moſt vnlike the miſtreſſe of the feaſt: and theſe are ſimple perſons, deſtitute of ſpirituall vnderſtanding, yet ſo as they feele the want of knowledge, and the weight of their ignorance, and leane no longer on worldly wiſedome.

Who ſo.] Ignorance is not a cauſe that ſhould ſtay men from hearing the word of God, but rather incite them to it. *Doct.* The more ignorant we are, the more need we haue of inſtruction.

Firſt, their neceſſitie doth require it: for who hath more need of eie ſaluc, then they whoſe eies are ſore? And who haue more need of guides, then they who haue loſt their ſight and are become blind? And eſpeciallie when the wdy is difficult and full of danger.

Secondly, the vertue and efficacie that is in the word ſhould allure them vnto it: for it is ſufficient to illuminate and giue light to all that ſeeke it, according to the teſtimonie that the Scripture giueth of it: *The ſtatutes of the Lord are right, and reioyce the heart: the commandement of the Lord is pure, and giueth light to the eies.* Pſalm.19.8.

Inſtruction for the miniſters of Chriſt ſo to deliuer the doctrine as it may be moſt plaine and perſpicuous to the ſimple people, after the exãple of the Apoſtle: *I had* (ſaith he) *rather in* 1.Cor.14.19. *Vſe* 1.

the Church to ſpeake fiue words with mine vnderſtanding, that I might alſo inſtruct others, then ten thouſand words in a ſtrange tongue. The good effect whereof hee ſheweth in this, *that if there come in one that beleeueth not, or is vnlearned, he is rebuked, and iudged. And ſo the thoughts of his heart are made manifeſt, and ſo he will fall downe on his face and worſhip God; and ſay plainelie that God is in you indeed:* 1.Cor.14.19.24.

2 Reproofe of ſuch as affect obſcuritie, that the vulgar ſort ſhould not vnderſtand them, taking it to bee for the glorie of their learning to mount aboue the capacitie of their hearers.

3 Conſolation for poore vnlearned men when they come to the Church of God: let them not be diſcouraged if their appetite ſerue them. They are bidden gueſts, and Chriſt hath prepared meate for them, and it doth his heart good to ſee them eate it. That is, he is well pleaſed, and doth reioyce that God doth beſtow his graces vpon them. For ſo the Euangeliſt witneſſeth, that *Ieſus reioyced in the ſpirit, and ſaid, I confeſſe vnto thee Father, Lord of heauen and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and learned, and haſt reuealed them to babes: euen ſo O Father, becauſe it pleaſed thee:* Luke 10.21.

4 Fourthlie for the confutation, firſt, of the popiſh ſeruice in a ſtrange language, wherein the ſimple people be ſo far from receiuing any comfort by the matter that is vttered, as that they vnderſtand not the very words that are ſpoken, and therefore God neuer ordained it for the vſe of his Church. Whereupon alſo followeth, that thoſe prieſts be none of Wiſedomes attendants, being neither fit to bee meſſengers abroad to call the gueſts, nor to be officers at home to giue them entertainement. Secondly, of ſuch as make ignorance their apologie for perſiſtance in ignorance. It is, ſay they, for ſchollers, and men of iudgement to heare ſermons, and not for the vnlearned. Here is that excuſe taken away, and ſo hath this text hitherto met with many other ſhifts and euaſions which men haue deuiſed to exempt their necks from Chriſt his yoke. Firſt ſay they, this preaching and other exerciſes of religion be fooliſh and ridiculous: but *Wiſdome* is the author thereof. Secondlie, they be dangerous to deale with: but *ſhe hath hewen out ſeuen pillars.*

pillars. Thirdlie, they bee tedious, and vnpleaſant: but ſhee hath made a banquet. Fourthly, we can learne as much by reading good bookes, as the beſt Preacher can teach vs: *but ſhee hath ſent forth her maides.* Fifthlie, ſermons are hard to come by, where ſhould wee haue them? *Shee crieth vpon the high places.* Sixthly, we are ſimple men and want vnderſtanding: but ſhee ſaith: *Who ſo is ſimple let him come hither, and he that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding,* &c.

Verſ.5. *Come and eate, and drinke of the wine that I haue mixed.*

THe exhortation which wiſdome vttered by her maides is againe repeated, to expreſſe the ſerious deſire and true meaning of the meſſengers, and miſtris in calling of the gueſts; and to let them know alſo that as they are bidden by way of inuitation, ſo they are commanded by way of ſummons, and therefore to addreſſe themſelues thereunto with al expedition. And becauſe it is not their preſence onely that is required, but a profitable vſe-making of the vndeſerued fauour that is ſhewed vnto them, therefore they are before hand informed to what end they are ſent for; to eate and drinke of the delicates prepared: which is to receiue the merits and graces of Chriſt, with the promiſes of God, and to make them their owne by faith, and particular application.

Doct. When God offers inſtruction, we ought to receiue it.

It concerneth vs duly to imbrace the mercies of God when hee doth offer them vnto vs. It is his good pleaſure that wee ſhould enioy them: otherwiſe they ſhould neuer haue been prouided. So by the Prophet he proclaimeth, Iſa.55.1. *Ho euery one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters: and ye that haue no ſiluer, come, buy, and eat,* &c. There is no victualler ſo deſirous of gueſts for his owne gaine, as Chriſt is of our companie for our ſaluation, he would haue vtterance of his heauenlie food that it ſtand not vpon his hand, and therefore calleth vpon all that feele themſelues in want, to come take their part with him. And becauſe they be needy and vnable to diſcharge the reckoning, he is content to be paid with a good ſtomacke to fall to, hee would haue thē worke it out at eating and drinking, that is, he doth

doth bestow it vpon them of his owne free fauour without all desert of their part.

Reason 1. First, God neuer offereth any thing vnto vs, which is not
2 meete and expedient for vs. Secondlie, it is a grieuous ingratitude, to reiect the kindnes of God: Luk.14. Which the Prophet doth aggrauate against vnfaithfull *Ahaz* who refused his comfortable message: *Heare now*, saith he, *O house of Dauid: Is it a small thing for you to grieue men, that yee will also grieue my*
3 *God?* Isa.7.13. Thirdly, not to receiue the gifts which the Lord doth proffer vnto vs, is to despise them. As is expressely shewed in the first Chapter, vers.24.25. *I haue called, and yee refused; I haue stretched out mine hand, and none would regard: But yee haue despised all my counsell, and would none of my correction.* For so he threatneth, that though *they call vpon him, he will not answere: though they seeke him earelie, they shall not find him:* Prou.1.28.
4 Fourthlie, benefits not accepted draw iudgements after them that cannot be auoided, Chap.1.27.

Vse 1. Admonition to make vse of the ministerie of the word, not sparing this holy meate, before the table be taken vp: for howsoeuer for corporall foode, though wee lose the opportunitie at one time, we may find it at another: though at one place we eate nothing, yet at another we may haue plentie: though no man would feast vs abroad, wee may prouide for our selues at home: yet the case standeth not so concerning this spirituall meate; neither our selues, nor any other beside Christ, can any where, at any time sustaine our soules: and being not fed by him we perish for euer, as Christ saith, Iohn 6.53.

2 Reproofe of Recusants and Brownists, that will not repaire with the congregation of Gods people to the place whither Christ calleth them. Secondly, of such as being present are yet without all fruit of Gods ordinances; they neither eate, nor drinke of the spirituall graces, but onely see the dressing of the meate, and the dishes set before others.

3 Consolation to them whose hearts doe feele the comfort of these graces, they be their owne by a principall property, as a man hath a peculiar right in his foode, whereof no man is partaker with him, but is made his owne by the surest possession, being

being turned into nouriture; and made not only his, but a part of him; and Chriſt is made more certainely, and properlie, and conſtantly ours, then the food that is conuerted into our owne ſubſtance: for it will abate againe and be conſumed, but he remaineth our owne for euer.

Verſ. 6. *Forſake the fooliſh, and liue yee, and walke in the way of wiſedome.*

NOw ſhe giueth rules of direction to them that were called, the better to fit them for her family: as firſt for their company, that ſince they are to haue ſocietie with the Saints in the Church, they are to ſeparate themſelues from the ſinners of the World. Whereunto ſhee perſwadeth them by the good effect enſuing, that the gaine of euerlaſting life will counteruaile and ouerpoiſe the loſſe of all worldly and fleſhly friends.

The other is for conuerſation, that for as much as they are to dwell with wiſedome (for all the gueſts are domeſticall and of the houſehold) that therefore all their waies and behauiour be holy and agreeable to wiſedome.

When we begin to cleaue to God and good men, wee muſt forthwith breake off all league with wicked men. It was one of the firſt points of counſel that *Peter* gaue to the three thouſand whom he then preſently conuerted, and that which *with many words hee did exhort them vnto, that they would ſaue themſelues from that froward generation.* If they would haue God to ſaue them from damnation, they muſt ſaue themſelues from the fellowſhip of damnable men: Act. 2. 40. *Doct.* If we will bee good men, we muſt forſake ill companie.

Firſt, in regard of the caſe wherein they ſtand, as appeareth by the conſequence of this text, that ſuch as be at vnion with dead men, be in ſtate of death, and therfore ſaith he, *leaue them, and liue.* Secondlie, in reſpect of behauiour, as the coherence importeth: *Forſake the fooliſh, and ſo walke in the way of wiſdome;* for ſooner they cannot, being corrupted with examples, companie, counſels, and all peſtilent and contagious courſes: and therefore ſaith the Prophet; *Away from me ye wicked, for I will keepe the commandements of my God.* *Reaſon* 1. 2 Pſal. 119. 115.

Thirdly, it bringeth them that vſe ſuch haunts, into ſuſpition with Chriſtians, whereby they bee depriued of that communion, which they might haue with them.

Vſe 1. A defence of them that ſhew their obedience therein, ceaſing to aſſociate themſelues with vngodly companions. It is not their ſingularity, and purity, that they would ſeeme better then other men: it is not their proud ſpirits diſdaining their neighbors, and thinking that no company is good enough for them: It is not becauſe they are new fangled, and ſo forſake their old friends, and caſt off al good fellowſhip: but it is the commandement of God that doth require it, & their duty to performe it.

2 Inſtruction to ſuch as deſire good men to bee ſociable with them, let them bee alſo good men, that their ſocietie may bee good and warrantable, for ſo Chriſtians may ſafelie and will cheerefullie adioyne themſelues vnto them. Otherwiſe there
2.Cor.6.16. neither is, nor muſt bee, nor can bee any good agreement betweene light and darkeneſſe, righteouſneſſe and vnrighteouſnes, God in the one, and Belial in the other.

3 Reproofe of them that can indifferently brooke all companies, and conuerſe with all manner of perſons: If they be ruffians, blaſphemers, and drunkards, they can play the good fellowes with them. If they be Chriſtians and ſuch as feare God, they can diſcourſe of points of religion, they can giue teſtimonie of godly preachers, they can relate what excellent ſermons they haue been at. Certaine it is, that they doe but counterfeit on the one ſide. Then is their behauiour natural when they conuerſe with the worſt; and meerelie artificiall, when they come among the beſt.

The other two clauſes of this verſe are reſerued to be handled in fit place.

Verſ. 7. *He that rebuketh a ſcorner, purchaſeth to himſelfe ſhame: he that rebuketh the wicked getteth himſelfe a blot.*

HItherto hath been ſhewed how the meſſage of ſaluation was ſent by Chriſt, & brought by his Miniſters: now here is declared how it is receiued of the people. And firſt, hee bringeth

bringeth ſuch as be vncapable of it, namelie, deſperate wicked men, being altogether incurable, whom the Scripture tearmeth ſcorners. And theſe will attempt to blemiſh and ſhame all thoſe that ſhall admoniſh them. As charging them ſometimes with arrogancie, malice, indiſcretion and hypocriſie; ſometimes with ſchiſme, ſedition, couetouſneſſe and other miſdemeanors: and if theſe imputations can take no hold on them, as grounded on no probabilitie, then they fall vpon their meane eſtate, and parentage, and education: for ſo they dealt with the Lord Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe: Mat. 13.35. *Is not this the Carpenters Son? is not his mother called Marie?*

The moſt faithfull Miniſters be commonly expoſed to greateſt reproches. If they begin to diſgrace ſin iuſtlie, ſinfull men will not ſpare to depraue them vniuſtlie. And for this purpoſe whatſoeuer commeth to hand will ſerue their turne. If they can prooue no euill by them, it is enough to traduce them for too much goodneſſe. So was *Iohn* accuſed to be a diuelliſh wretch, for being, as they made it, too preciſe and pure in mortification: and Chriſt on the other ſide condemned of intemperancie, for inioying a more free libertie in the holie vſe of the creatures. *Doct.* 1. The beſt men moſt defamed. Mat. 11.18.19.

Firſt, hereby they vſe a policie to ſhift for themſelues, ſtriuing to fence their hearts from feare, and their names from infamie. For if they could perſwade their owne ſoules, that theſe ſharpe cenſurers were as bad as othermen, they think it would ward off the ſtroke of their rebukes: if they could make others beleeue that all their accuſations were but calumniations, it would free them from ignominie and diſcredit. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondlie, they ſeeke to reuenge themſelues in this, by drawing their admonitors into contempt and danger. They purpoſely take the way not only to quench the loue and good liking which the people bare to them, but to kindle the diſpleaſure of the Magiſtrate againſt them. As is to be ſeene in the practiſe of *Amaziah* complaining to King *Ieroboam* of the Prophet: *Amos hath conſpired againſt thee in the midſt of the houſe of Iſrael: the land is not able to beare all his words.* And ſo *Iſaiah*, cenſuring this crueltie, ſaith, *that they made a man to ſinne in* 2 Amos 7.10.

word: that is, by reſting and peruerting mens words, they made that to be ſinne, which was well and iuſtly ſpoken, *and tooke him in a ſnare, which reproued them in the gate, and made the iuſt to fall without cauſe:* Iſai.29.21.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction, not to deale like ſcorners, in ſeeking to blemiſh them that would wipe out our blemiſhes. If they haue faults to be reproued, let vs ſhew our loue at ſome other time, and not our ſpleene at this time: it is no good way of clearing, to pleade guiltleſſe by recrimination.

2 Secondly, that Miniſters and ſuch as are to admoniſh, be not ſhielded only with patience, but with innocencie, and vpright behauiour. For if wicked men be growne to that impudency, as to giue aſſault to the names of harmeleſſe perſons, (their obtrectations recoiling vpon themſelues, to their owne ſhame) how would they inſult ouer vs, if they had iuſt aduantage againſt vs?

3 Thirdly, not to be credulous to the clamorous reports of vngodlie men, which raiſe vp rumours againſt Chriſtians. You ſhall find the greateſt offenders, to bee the moſt grieuous accuſers: they would couer their faults by bearing the world in hand, that ſuch as vſe to find fault with them, bee moſt faultie.

Verſ.8. *Rebuke not a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee:* &c.

IN the former verſe was ſhewed, how ſcorners vſe to deale with them that rebuke them: and here the holy Ghoſt teacheth how we muſt deale with ſcorners: namely, ſithence wee ſhall needleſſelie ſtirre vp hatred againſt our ſelues, and performe no good to them, that therefore we deſiſt from them, and let them alone. Wherein notwithſtanding good diſcretion is to be vſed, that none which may be corrigible be reiected for a ſcorner, but ſuch as vpon ſufficient triall haue declared themſelues by a continued obſtinacie to be ſo. And in this caſe alſo though priuate reproofes are to bee ſpared, yet muſt they publikelie bee purſued by the miniſtrie, and cenſured by the Church, and puniſhed by the Magiſtrate.

The

The benefit of Chriſtian Counſell is not to be offered to an obſtinate ſinner. So doth the holie Ghoſt teach in another place of this booke: Chap. 23. 9. *Speake not in the eares of a foole: for he will deſpiſe the wiſdome of thy words.* He would not haue the gratious ſpeeches of godlie Chriſtians to be powred into his eares, which is well knowne not to ſuffer them to ſinke into his heart to worke grace there; but ſetteth heart, and lippes and life contemptuouſlie to deſpiſe them. *Doct.* Obſtinate perſons are vnworthie a reproofe.

Firſt, it is a certaine loſſe of labour to deale with them, and to as good purpoſe to lay a plaiſter to a dead mans wound, as to endeuour to heale them. *Reaſons* 1.

Secondly, it is a loſſe of thoſe pretious admonitions: the holy things of God are throwne to dogs: and the pearles and ornaments of Chriſtians are caſt to vnteachable ſwine, that will trample them vnder feete: Matth. 7. 6. 2

Thirdly, it cannot bee without perill to our ſelues, which God doth not call vs vnto: for their hatred is like to worke diſgrace, or violence, or other hurts which their diſtempered affections doe threaten. So Chriſt ſaith, that hogs will all to rent them that ſo offer to feede them. 3

Inſtruction to be verie circumſpect what perſons we deale with, that there be ſome hope of ſucceſſe. If after walking and ſtanding in wicked waies, they ſit at reſt in the ſcorners chaire, let vs leaue them there and diſquiet them no further. For if we moleſt them, they will trouble vs, and going beyond our bounds againſt the rule of Chriſt, where is our warrant of ſafetie againſt their malice; or of patience, wiſedome, and moderation to containe our ſelues? *Vſe.*

Verſ. 8. *But rebuke a wiſe man, and he will loue thee.*

9. *Giue admonition to the wiſe, and he will be the wiſer: teach a righteous man, and he will increaſe in learning.*

NOw he commeth on the contrarie ſide to commend the competent hearers of Wiſedome, vpon whom good leſſons are well beſtowed. And they are deſcribed, firſt by their willing receiuing of inſtruction, that they loue them the

better that ſhall deale plainely with them. Secondlie, by the good vſe they make of it, increaſing both in knowledge and practiſe of vnderſtanding, and therefore are called wiſe and righteous.

Doct. 1. The beſt may mend.

Rebuke. Men of beſt knowledge and pietie muſt ſometimes bee admoniſhed of their faults. So was *Dauid*, ſo was *Iehoſaphat*, *Ezekias*, *Peter*, and many other. Rich garments require bruſhing, and fine linen hath need of waſhing, and the moſt pleaſant and delightfull gardens muſt oftentimes bee weeded.

Reaſon 1. First, originall corruption doth cleaue vnto their nature and infect their hearts, and many times defileth their behauiour, and though they make it languiſh through wounds that they giue it; yet it will neuer bee ſtarke dead ſo long as they bee aliue.

2 Secondly, God hath ordained it as a medicine for humilitie againſt pride, that they ſhall ſtand in neede of the helpe of their brethren, and ſometime alſo come vnder their cenſures.

3 Thirdly, it is a bond whereby one Chriſtian is knit to another, when the one doth declare loue by giuing of faithfull counſell, and the other by thankfull receiuing of it.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction: Firſt, that the good gifts of Gods children cauſe vs not to denie this dutie to them, when their wants and our opportunitie call for it. Secondlie, to conceiue louinglie of them that ſhew vs this kindneſſe: they doe good to our ſoules, and befriend vs in our names, by couering our ſinnes from others and ſhewing them to our ſelues, which elſe might break out to our infamie: Iam. 5. 20. And by this meanes God ſhall be ſerued, and his Scripture obeyed on both ſides: whileſt the one part doth brotherly admoniſh according to the precept that here is giuen, and the other part doth kindly accept it according to the reaſon annexed.

Confutation of them that too far iuſtifie the waies of good men, approuing their errors in opinion, their ſlips in ſpeeches, their ſlidings in actions, and all elſe to be wel and warrantable, and imitable, if the men be wiſe and godly. Nothing of them is to be miſliked, that hath an example of any good men practiſing

eliſing the like: but they conſider not, that ſome things may grow on the ſlips that ſpring from the roote; and not all, on the ſience that is ingrafted.

It is a note of a man that is truelie religious, to increaſe in grace and vnderſtanding. It appeareth that they liue by their meate, and haue good digeſtion of it, when they grow in ſtature, ſtrength, and ſtomacke. So was it ſaid in the firſt Chapter; Verſ. 5. *A wiſe man ſhall heare and increaſe in learning.* The bare hearing doth not neceſſarilie argue a wiſe man. For fooles doe often bring their eares to the word: but to heare, and learne, and to learne with increaſe, that doth teſtifie an holie wiſdome. *Doct.* 2. He is trulie gratious, that growes in grace.

Gods bleſſing doth accompanie ſuch as haue ſinceritie in them, to adde to their ſtocke: and from ſuch as haue no more but a ſhew, hee taketh away that alſo, that they may appeare to be diſſemblers: Luke 8. 18. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, ſound vnderſtanding doth diſcouer the defect of vnderſtanding; what great need they haue, what little ſtore they haue, and the dore of Gods ſtore-houſe and treaſure opened to them for their full ſupplie. 2

Thirdlie, they know the wants of theſe heauenly iewels, that their price is ineſtimable, and therefore they grow inſatiable in their deſires, and though they get much, yet ſtill they labour for more, and bee as greedie in hauing, as though they had nothing at all. 3

Fourthly, the former taſting and feeding on this celeſtiall food hath brought them to a perpetuall longing after it: the more they receiue, the more hungrie they are: the exerciſe of eating hath ſo ſharpened their appetite, as they deſire continuallie to eate. 4

Inſtruction to approoue our wiſdome and righteouſneſſe in proceeding to be more wiſe and righteous: and ſo ſhall we beſt pleaſe God himſelfe. As Saint *Paul* perſwadeth vs in one place: *Wee beſeech you brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Ieſus, that yee increaſe more, And more, as yee haue receiued of vs, how yee ought to walke, and to pleaſe God.* *Vſe* 1. 1. Theſ. 4. 1.

So ſhall wee bee inriched with more full holineſſe.

For.

2.Cor.7.1. For thereunto he also encourageth vs in another place: *Seeing we haue these promises, deerelie beloued, let vs cleanse our selues from all filthinesse of the flesh and spirit, and grow vp vnto full holinesse in the feare of God.* So shall wee bee established more firmelie, and kept from all apostasie and backsliding. As Saint *Peter* teacheth: 2.Pet.3.17.18. *Beware lest ye be plucked away with the error of the wicked, and fall from your owne stedfastnesse. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Iesus Christ.*

2 Reproofe of *Non proficients*, which are taught much and learne little, and practise nothing at all. Secondlie, of full persons, which thinke they haue attained to a sufficiencie: they haue plied it hitherto, and now they may giue ouer their labours, they haue gotten enough, and now what neede they seeke any more? But let them heare what the spirit of God
Apoc.3.17. testifieth of their case to the conceited Laodiceans, when they said they were rich and increased with goods, and wanted nothing, then they were wretched, and miserable, and poore, and had nothing. Hee that hath as much grace as euer he did desire, did neuer truly desire to haue any. And hee that doth purpose neuer to be better, will presentlie grow to bee worse, and last of all proone to be starke naught.

3 Consolation for such as bee of the mending hand, though they haue defects and imperfections, and bee drawne aside sometimes with lusts and corruptions: yet if they still get ground of these enemies, and some addition come dailie to their vnderstanding and desires, by euery Sermon and other good exercise, let them beleeue the testimonie of the holie Ghost, they be in the number of the wise and righteous.

Vers.10. *The beginning of wisdome is the feare of the Lord, and the knowledge of holy men is vnderstanding.*

HAuing so much commended Wisdome and so earnestlie perswaded men vnto it, he sheweth now wherein it doth consist, that men might not be deceiued by the counterfeit colour of it, describing it:

First,

Firſt, by the matter, that is, true pietie and religion, called commonly in the word, the feare of God, becauſe it is an eſſentiall part thereof: and this is not a caſe contingent, as though wiſedome and pietie might ſometimes concurre in one perſon and ſometimes be diſſeuered: but neceſſarie and perpetuall, the one being alwaies the beginning of the other.

Secondly, by the manner, that is, not the knowledge of naturall things that is in Philoſophers: nor the knowledge of ciuill affaires that is in Politicians: nor the hiſtoricall and artificial knowledge of points of religion that is in hypocrites: but the myſticall knowledge of the myſteries of ſaluation, which the ſpirit of God doth reueale to the hearts of Chriſtians. Whereof the holie Ghoſt ſpeaketh at large in the Epiſtle to the Corinthians, Chap. 2. 9. 10. 11. *The things which eye hath not ſeene, neither eare hath heard: neither came into mans heart, are, which God hath prepared for them that loue him. But God hath reuealed them vnto vs by his ſpirit.*

No man can be truly wiſe before he be vnfainedly religious. *Doct.* 1. Religious men only are wiſe.

Salomon had experience both of heauenly wiſedome and humane wiſedome, of the ſhew of the one, and foundneſſe of the other, & thus doth he declare his iudgement: *Let vs feare God and keepe his Commandements, for this is the whole man.* Nothing but this can make a man to be a man, without which hee is in worſe ſtate then a beaſt: his glorie and excellencie conſiſteth in it, and all his profit and comfort proceedeth from it. Eccleſ. 12. 13.

Firſt, God himſelfe doth vſually in his Word call all vnregenerate men fooles, eſpeciallie euerie where in this booke; expreſſely, and by conſequent in Deut. 32. 28. 29. *They are a nation voide of counſell, neither is there any vnderſtanding in them. O that they were wiſe, then they would vnderſtand this: they would conſider their latter end.* Now he ſeeth all things as they be, and not as they ſeeme to be: and foreſeeth all euents that ſhall fall out hereafter, and therefore his teſtimonie is to be receiued. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, wiſdome is a ſtreame that floweth onely from the Word, and that to them that make conſcience and not a bare profeſſion of it. So hee ſpeaketh by the Prophet concerning hypocrites: *Loe they haue reiected the word of the*

Lord, and what wiſedome is there in them? Ierem.8.9.

3 Many infallible fruits of the ſpirit be incloſed in it and iſſue from it, and are euermore in company with it, as purity, gentleneſſe, readineſſe to be intreated, mercie and fulneſſe of good fruits, ſinceritie, &c. Iam.3.17.

4 The miſerable condition of all irreligious people, whereas euery one is happie that is wiſe.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction, that if we would haue the eſtimation, comfort, direction, ſucceſſe, or any benefit of wiſedome, let vs not labour for a politike head, but a holy and ſanctified heart: not ſo much for learning and abilitie to diſcourſe & diſpute of points of religion, as for faith to beleeue, and a good conſcience to performe obedience. *I haue taught you,* ſaith *Moſes, ordinances, and lawes, as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye ſhould do euen ſo within the land whither yee goe to poſſeſſe it. Keepe them therefore, and doe them: for that is your wiſedome and vnderſtanding in the ſight of the people.* Deut.4.5.6.

2 Confutation of them that eſteeme all to bee wiſe that goe beyond others in wit: and them eſpecially that compaſſe great liuings and wealth. Was not *Achitophel* more wittie then any? and did hee not yet play the foole more then all? hath not Satan more ſubtiltie and cunning then all the men in the world? and yet the moſt fooliſh creature to worke his owne woe that euer God made in the world. The Scripture calleth him a principalitie and a power, and ſpeaketh of his craft, but no where giueth him the teſtimonie of wiſedome. And to them that know how to feather their neſts and increaſe their ſtate, the rich man in the Goſpell may be a preſident: he could get, and ſaue, and keepe, and thriue as long as hee liued, and yet God called him *foole* when he died: *and ſo* (ſaith he) *is euery one that gathereth riches to himſelfe, and is not rich in God.* Luk.12.20.29.

3 Conſolation againſt the reproches, that are caſt vpon men, when they ſet themſelues to feare the Lord: now (ſaith the world) they begin to be fools, hitherto they haue liued in good account, eſteemed for ſenſible wiſe men, and henceforth they will be nothing ſet by; now (ſaith the Lord) they begin to be wiſe: hitherto they could haue no approbation from God, or good

good men, but now they take the way for good vnderſtanding.

And the knowledge.] Sound and ſanctified knowledge is the mother of all Chriſtian deuotion: where that faileth, there can be no ſincere pietie. So ſaith God himſelfe in the firſt Chapter, verſ. 29. *They hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the feare of the Lord.* Which *Iob* reproues in the wicked worldlings of his time: *They ſay to God, depart from vs, we deſire not the knowledge of thy waies; who is the Almightie, that we ſhould ſerue him?* and *what profit ſhall we haue if we ſhould pray to him?* wherein they declare that they hate his preſence, and reiect the knowledge of his will, and caſt off all care of his worſhip, and ſo there is an irreligious heart, an ignorant minde, and an impious behauiour. *Doct.* 2. No true deuotion without true knowledge. Iob 21.14.15.

Firſt, faith doth neuer goe without it: for faith is a perſwaſion, and that perſwaſion is an high degree of knowledge, the heart being firmely aſſured of the truth of that which Gods promiſe did giue them to vnderſtand. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, the vnderſtanding is the eye of the ſoule to giue direction, and the fountaine from whence all good affections doe ſpring. 2

Thirdly, there can bee no exerciſe of godlineſſe (which is the very breath of al religion) where the commandement and promiſe of God is not apprehended. 3

Fourthly, the Diuell hath the dominion of them that liue altogether in blindneſſe: for hee is the Prince of darkneſſe; he taketh, and holdeth, and leadeth them according to his wil: and he will neuer bee willing that either God ſhould bee ſerued, or any man ſhould be ſaued. 4 Epheſ. 6.12. 2. Tim. 2.26.

Inſtruction to vſe all induſtrie and diligence to get knowledge: eſpecially that which hath the ſtampe of grace vpon it, and is proper to the people of God. Send to heauen for it by prayer to the Lord: ſearch in the word for it with all good indeuors, by hearing and reading, by meditation and conference, by obſeruation and experience, and all other good exerciſes. *Vſe* 1.

Confutation of ſuch as be altogether careleſſe of vnderſtanding, that haue paſt a ſtate of their ſoules to ignorance for terme of life: they would be reputed religious and godly, and 2

yet want both metal and making of all religion and godlineſſe: but they, though they bee without knowledge, haue (as they ſay) a good minde. But why ſaith the Scripture? *without knowledge the mind is not good*: Prou.19.2. Yet they hope in another world, to ſpeede as well as the beſt: and yet the Apoſtle teacheth that *Chriſt ſhall come in flaming fire, rendring vengeance to them that doe not know God*: doe they ſpeede ſo well that bee condemned? 2.Theſſ.1.8.

Secondly, of them that haue gotten ſome knowledge, but are voide of all ſinceritie and obedience: it is not a vertue for their good, but a ſin for their hurt: and though for a time they make it ſerue their turne for a ſhew, yet it will turne to their ſorrow in the end: for they increaſe the hardneſſe of their hart, and the guiltineſſe of their conſcience, and the number of their ſtripes, according to the meaſure of their fruitleſſe knowledge: Luke 12.47.

Verſ.11. *For thy daies ſhall be multiplied by me, and the yeeres of thy life ſhall be augmented.*

12. *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelfe: and if thou be a ſinner, thou alone ſhalt ſuffer.*

AFter the deſcription of wiſedome, whereby it may bee rightly diſcerned, is here propoſed the profit and reward of it, whereby we are perſwaded to imbrace it: and that is,

Firſt, in a peculiar, namely, long life: which is not ſo to bee vnderſtood as though it were perpetual, and ſo of abſolute neceſſitie: for then good men muſt grow to be old men, and all which die young, ſhould die wicked and damned: but that God hath the keeping of their liues in ſuch good ſafety as they ſhall neuer be taken away before due ſeaſon: they ſhall not die ſo ſoone, as that it would be better for them to liue longer: nor liue ſo long, as that it might be hurtfull they died not ſooner. The point doth *Eliphaz* trulie expound to *Iob*, and all other righteous perſons: Iob 5.26. *Thou ſhalt goe to thy graue in a full age, as a crop of corne commeth in due ſeaſon into the barne.* Now all graine is not of equall proportion of growth: ſome is ſowne before

Iob 5.26.

fore others, and yet is cut downe after them: ſome is ſowen after others, and commeth to maturity before them: ſo that good husbands diſpoſe not of their harueſt by meaſure of time, but by the ripeneſſe of their corne: and two extremities they prouidently auoide; neither too haſtily to inne the fruits of their fields or trees, for ſo they would wither away: neither to deſer the gathering of thē after they be ripe, for ſo they would drop off, and ſhed, and grow to rottenneſſe. Afterwards he declareth the recompence of wiſedome in generall: that the poſſeſſion and practiſe thereof, is not only a ſeruice to God, nor alone for his ſake ſo often required: but redoundeth alſo to the profit of them that be owners and performers of it. And to this is oppoſed the contrarie ſtate of thoſe peruerſe and wilfull ſcorners, that howſoeuer their deſire and purpoſe is to doe miſchiefe to others, yet all their malice returneth on their owne heads.

Thy daies ſhall be multiplied, &c.] Wiſdome and grace do not onely procure our life to be euerlaſting in heauen, but of good and ſufficient continuance in earth. So is ſhe ſaid to come like a liberall and bountifull Lady: Chap. 3. 16. which brought her hands full to beſtow vpon her friends: *length of daies being in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and glory*: becauſe life it ſelfe is more precious then wealth and aduancement which depend vpon it, and are but ornaments of it, therfore ſhe bringeth the continuance of that in her right hand, as a gift of greater value: and the other in the left, as inferiour to it, but all very excellent comming out of thoſe glorious hands. *Doct.* 1. Grace giues maintenance for this life, as well as for eternall life.

Firſt, that prouidence and power of God doth protect vs from all the euils that might befall vs: as we vſe to deale in our gardens and orchards, plucking vp the nettle and weedes, and preſeruing the good hearbs: rooting out the briars and brambles, and nouriſhing the fruitfull trees. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, his Angels haue a charge to keepe vs, by whoſe miniſtrie our life is defended: Pſalme 91. 10. 11. 2

Thirdly, the feare of God doth make the heart good, and a good heart is made cheerefull, and a cheerefull heart procureth good health, and good health prolongeth the life. 3

Fourthly, a good man will ſeeke and ſue to God by pray- 4

ers in the good estate of his bodie to haue it continued, in weakenesse and infirmities to be cured: and this will they doe ordinarily, as *Ezekias* did in a case extraordinarie, alwaies resigning themselues to his will.

5 Fifthly, a godly man will bee trustie to himselfe in the keeping of his owne bodie (auoiding surfetings, and distempers, and disorders, whereby wicked men doe weaken themselues) and will conscionablie vse all fit meanes of comfort, health and safetie.

Vse 1. Confutation of them that thinke the seruices of wisedome to bee the greatest meanes to shorten mens daies. They will kill themselues (say they) by fasting, and praying, and musing, and reading, and running to Sermons: but thus to complaine, is indirectly to blaspheme God; either with imputation of vnfaithfulnesse towards them that seeke him, or with impotencie, and defect of power: for they inferre that hee windeth them into danger by promise of safetie; or that the repaire of the soule must needs be the ruine of the body, and so he cannot heale the one part of man, without hurting of the other.

Instruction to take this holy receit, which is a medicine for all diseases, and a remedie to preuent all kinde of mischiefes. No physicke so forcible to health, nor plentie so sufficient against want, nor any multitude of men and munition is so able to defend vs from violence.

3 Consolation to them that haue a good conscience, that they alwaies euery where haue their safetie with them, because they carrie grace in their hearts, and God carries them in his hands. 1. Sam. 25. 29. That is true of euery faithfull seruant of God, that *Abigail* did speake concerning *Dauid*: that their *soule is bound in the bundle of life with God*; it lieth not loose and scattered for enemies to finde, and take vp, or tread vpon at their pleasure; but it is in Gods owne custodie, and bound vp, that it shall neither drop down, nor be wrested from him. He will defend them in warre, and feede them in dearth, and preserue them in pestilence, and death shall neuer come before they may comfortably bid it welcome: Iob 5. 19. 20.

Doct. 2. *If thou be wise*, &c.] Of all men Christians bee most prouident

dent to procure their owne good proſperitie. That teſtimonie is giuen of them by the Lord himſelfe, Chap.3.13.14. *Bleſſed is the man that findeth wiſedome, and the man that getteth vnderſtanding. For the merchandiſe thereof is better then the merchandiſe of ſiluer, and the gaine thereof is better then gold.* They that obtaine not onely the knowledge of wiſedome but the ſound and ſure poſſeſſion thereof, which is meant by finding, are all in a bleſſed ſtate, not deſtitute of any happineſſe. The merchants which trafficke with the Indians for gold, and pearles, and precious ſtones, make not their commoditie in any proportion comparable to theirs that deale with the God of heauen for the graces of his Spirit. Onely Chriſtians are good husbands.

Firſt, in reſpect of outward ſtate they are in good caſe, the bleſſing of God neuer failing to miniſter vnto them all good things, in fitteſt ſeaſon, in meeteſt manner, and moſt competent, and conuenient meaſure. They haue euery thing that they neede, and enioy the vſe of euery thing that they haue. God bleſſeth their labours, that thereby they get ſubſtance: God bleſſeth their ſubſtance, that thereby they are nouriſhed by them: God bleſſeth their nouriſhment, that there-withall they haue ioy and comfort: and if at any time they fall into afflictions, they haue ſupportation in them, deliuerance from them, and benefit by them. All ſickneſſe ſhall be wholſome to them, all diſgraces for their honour: all loſſes for their gaine: all dangers for their ſafetie: all troubles for their peace and quietneſſe. *Reaſon* 1. Pſalm.128.2.

Secondly, in reſpect of the ſtate of their ſoules, the bleſſednеſſe whereof conſiſteth in righteouſnes: and that doth yeeld ſuch a benefit, which, as the Apoſtle doth truly teſtifie, doth far ſurpaſſe the capacitie of all ſenſe and humane reaſon. Which will appeare, firſt, if wee conſider the miſerie out of which they haue eſcaped: they were the enemies of God, and are reconciled to him: they were moſt deepely in debt, and are diſcharged of it: they were bondmen, and are made free: they were condemned, and are pardoned: they were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, and are quickned to euerlaſting life. Secondlie, if we reſpect the gifts that God vouchſafeth them: their nature 2

ture is healed, their ſoules are ſanctified, they haue a free acceſſe to God, the holy Ghoſt is in them, Ieſus Chriſt is beſtowed vpon them: all his merits, and all his graces, and all his prerogatiues are communicated vnto them. Thirdly, the fruite of their wiſedome is apparant at their death: for then doth their faith, and faithfull behauiour ſtand to them, and viſit their hearts, and animates them with hope againſt the temptations of Satan, and feare of hell, and damnation, and all kindes of deſperation. If it be true that *a good conſcience is a continuall feaſt*, then eſpecially is it moſt forcible and comfortable at that time. Fourthly, the full and perfect reward of it ſhall be rendred vnto them in the life to come, and chiefly at the laſt day, in the preſence of God, and men, and angels, elect and reprobate, and euery particular of euery ſort, who ſhall heare their praiſes, and ſee their glorious aduancement.

Prou.15.15.

Vſe 1. Confutation of them, that eſteeme mortified Chriſtians of all other creatures to be moſt ſillie, and voide of prudencie, and moſt careleſſe, & void of all forecaſt for their affaires. Secondly, of them that thinke all the precepts, and doctrines of obedience are onely for the exerciſe of the Miniſters authoritie, and nothing for the furtherance of the peoples commodity, ſo they call it, Pſalme 2.3. *Let vs breake their bands, and caſt their cords from vs.* As who would ſay, it is an impriſonment, and grieuous reſtraint to be vnder Chriſt and his Miniſterie. Whereas inſtruction is for his vſe that doth receiue it, and not for his will, that doth deliuer it: It is not a pack or burthen laid vpon his ſhoulders to carrie for others: but as monie put into his purſe to vſe for himſelfe.

2 Inſtruction to take greateſt paines in husbanding the heart, to labour moſt for the crop of grace, and to be moſt diligent in doing of good. Corne, and cattell, and monie, and other wealth may be gotten for other men, and happilie for our enemies: but the holie leſſons that wee conſcionablie learne, the gracious ſpeeches that wee ſeaſonablie vtter, and all the good workes that we duly performe, are treaſured vp in heauen for our owne ſoules.

3 Conſolation againſt the manifold diſcouragements which might

might weaken the hearts of ſuch as be poſſeſſed with this wiſdome. They are railed vpon by ſome to be hurtfull men: they are ieſted at by others to be fooliſh men: they are threatned, they are perſecuted, and euery way iniuriouſly dealt with: yet let none of theſe things driue them from their wiſedome, and make them turne fooles, to cauſe them to leaue off friendſhip with themſelues, and to forſake their owne gaine. It is more beneficiall for them to be godly, then it can be hurtfull to bee moleſted. A flight of ſnow, or ſhower of raine, or flaſh of lightning, or clap of thunder, cannot compell a chriſtie farmer to diſclaime his good ground, and ſurceaſe his husbandrie.

If thou be a ſcorner, &c.] The wicked bee moſt their owne foes. Which point this holie wiſedome confirmeth in the former Chapter, verſ. 35. *Hee that ſinneth againſt mee hurteth his owne ſoule, and all that hate me loue death.* In all the attempts, and proceedings againſt good men, wiſdome it ſelfe is ſmitten at, for their quarrell is againſt the ſeruants for the miſtreſſe ſake: but they onely ſinne againſt it, but can do no hurt vnto it; for that redoundeth wholly vpon themſelues. And though they be all for themſelues, and carried ſtongly with ſelfe-loue in affection, yet they doe the worke of mortall hatred, and become their owne deadly foes in effect. *Doct.* 3. The wicked man hath no foe like himſelfe.

The reaſons which were alleaged for the former point, will alſo make this manifeſt by the contrary. For as wiſe men and ſcorners ſerue contrary maſters, and haue contrarie hearts, and behauiours: ſo there is alſo a contrarietie of condition, and of euerie thing that befalleth vnto them. Whatſoeuer miſeries therefore thoſe other eſcaped, theſe ſhall ſurely fall into: and whatſoeuer happines the other attained vnto for bodie, ſoule, ſtate, or name, in life, at death, departed hence, and at the reſurrection, theſe ſhall be depriued of them. *Reaſon.*

Terror for ſinfull men which ſeeme to be in ſafetie and very good caſe, hauing yet ſuffered nothing but hardnes of heart, and the poiſon of ſinne working in their ſoules, which they leaſt of all doe feele. They muſt ſuffer alſo the paine of ſinne, as well as the pleaſure: and who knoweth how ſoone, *Vſe* 1.

and sodainely it will come vpon them. But in the meane time they plague such as set against them, and pursue them that goe about to crosse their courses: and this they glorie in, as a matter of great contentment. But herein they make others happie, and themselues miserable, they procure the blessing of God vpon them whom they maligne as enemies, and bring the curse vpon their owne soules and bodies. But yet they preuaile further in their purposes: by feare, or flattery, by cõpany, counsell, or constraint, they draw men into sin; and this they take to be a victorie, and now others bee in as bad case as they, and if things fall out to be amisse with them, they shal haue company in sorrow: but this will bee no ease of their burden; for that shall lie wholly vpon themselues. They that suffer themselues to bee seduced by them, shall likewise suffer punishment with them, but not detract any from theirs, but adde much more vnto it, according as the case standeth with Satan.

Vers. 13. *A foolish woman is alwaies babling, she is ignorant, and knoweth nothing.*

THus much hath been spoken of wisdoms wholsome banquet, which the Lord to that end proposed, that we might bee allured vnto it. Now followeth the feast of Folly, which shee maketh to the end, that shee may poison her guests, and God discouereth, for this purpose that wee might auoid it. And here, as also in that which followeth, shee is described by her qualities and behauiour, carrying the right stampe and print of an harlot. One thing is, that shee is giuen to much talke, to make a noise: which was the note of the whorish woman, Chap. 7. 11. The meaning here is, that sinfulnesse and Satan, by the mouthes of sinfull persons, doe pretend manie reasons to iustifie any wicked cause, and vse cunning perswasions to draw men thereunto; as the vnchast woman doth flow with intising speeches. And though she haue a lauish tongue, yet we know (according as wee vse to say) that none is so bold, as blind Bayard. The drift is, that the factors for follie, such as labour to promote sinne, be vtterly destitute of sauing vnder-

vnderſtanding, which was called before, the knowledge of holy men.

She is babling, &c.] It is no ſure note of a good cauſe to bee ſet forth with many words. *Hananiah* maintained his cauſe more ſtifly than *Ieremie*, for hee after a ſort gaue place to the others confident aſſeuerations: but *Ieremie* maintained his cauſe more truelie than *Hananiah*, for God and experience confirmed his teſtimonie: Ier. 28. *Zidkiah* and his companions the falſe Prophets were more violent in giuing incouragement to *Ahab* for his voiage to Ramoth Gilead: but *Micaiah* was more faithfull in diſſwading him from it: 1. King. 22. *Doct.* 1. Many words make not a matter good

Firſt, wickedneſſe hath many tongues to ſpeake by, all vnregenerate men being readie to pleade for it. *Reaſons* 1.

Secondly, Satan doth ſharpen mens wits, and fine their tongues, and euery way aſſiſt them, that ſtand in defence of his cauſes, and kingdome. 2

Thirdlie, all vngodly men by their owne diſpoſition are earneſtlie affected to folly and leaudneſſe, being as their right hand and deareſt member of their body; and therefore will ſpeake in the behalfe therof, as if the caſe did neerely concerne their owne eſtate. 3

Fourthly, all the arguments, that are brought for any bad cauſe, are light and vtterly void of force: and therefore that which faileth in qualitie, they will fill vp in quantitie, and ſo ſupplie the want of weight by multitude of words. 4

Fifthly, ſucceſſe doth much animate folly, and her adherents, to ſpeake much: for be the matter neuer ſo vniuſt and falſe: be the reaſons neuer ſo ſlight, and ſlender: be the perſon neuer ſo baſe and abiect: yet if a ſinner ſtand vp for ſinne, all ſinfull men euery where will giue him allowance. 5

Admonition, that we neuer conclude the equitie of a cauſe by the number of words, as though the force of the matter ſtood in the violence of ſpeech, and all were weake that either wanted ſtrong breath for it, or elſe had vehement oppoſition againſt it. The multitude of allegations is of no value, where ſoundneſſe is wanting in the points alleaged. And it is vſuall that innocent perſons bee leaſt forward to ſpeake, and *Vſe* 1.

such as bee faultie be seldome giuen to silence. When *Moses* came to take vp the matter betweene the two Israelites, hee that was most leaud, was most loud: the offender that did the wrong, was most readie to complaine of wrong offered. *What wilt thou kill mee, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?* Act. 7. 27. 28.

2 Confutation of them that iustifie Poperie, and the corruptions of it by this, that many take part with it. Much is said for it, great commendation is giuen of it. All this is true, it is much praised, but only by the fooliſh babling woman: they are full of speech, and frequent in writing, and yet doe nothing els, but some out froth and falsehood. If multitude or cries of commendations were sufficient to credit a cause, and cleare it, *Diana* were a glorious goddesse, so highlie magnified by the generall applause of the Ephesians: Act. 19. 28. Secondly, of such as take it for an inuincible testimonie against the Gospell, and the sincere professours of it, that they be so much blamed, and so many professe their dislike of them. So they dealt with *Ieremie*, though he neither bought nor sold with them, nor offered any colour of iniurie to them, yet euery man spake euill of him: Ier. 15. 10. So Christianitie in *Paules* time was counted a sect, and euerie where spoken against. And so our Sauiour himselfe had the sentence of death inforced vpon him, by the violent crie of the people.

Doct. 2. Follies friends are most fooles.

Ignorant, &c.] So farre as any man giueth himselfe to bee an Agent for sinne, so farre he bewraieth his owne ignorance. All deceiuers and euill men are first deceiued: 2 Tim. 3. 13. The diuell first catcheth one, and maketh him a baite to take another, as it fell out in the ouerthrow of our first parents.

Reason 1. First, many of them haue their minds darkned with want of knowledge, that they cannot discerne betwixt light and darknesse, truth and falsehood.

2 Secondlie, all the rest haue their hearts blindfolded with wilfulnesse, that they will not vnderstand. For if they know the will of God, and the meaning of his word, they discerne not of his nature that he is offended with euery thing which is contrary

contrary to his word. Or if they apprehend that, and conceiue it to be ſo: yet they thinke him remiſſe, that hee will not ſo ſeuerely puniſh them that offend him. Or if they haue not ſuch an erroneous opinion of his dealing towards all, yet they hope for indulgence to themſelues, that he will caſt off ſome part of his iuſtice to diſpenſe with them, howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth with others. As *Moſes* bringeth them in, bleſſing themſelues in their hearts, and ſaying: *I ſhall haue peace, although I walke according to the ſtubbornneſſe of mine owne heart:* Deut. 29. 19.

Reproofe of their follie that ſeeke to gather the praiſe of knowledge out of the practiſe of ignorance; that contradict, and diſgrace all ſound points of ſanctification. Of which ſort alſo are they that trouble the Church by ſetting abroach new, fruitleſſe, fantaſticall, and pernicious opinions, or reuiuing thoſe that haue been formerly ſuppreſſed, or managing thoſe that be preſently in queſtion. Theſe men beguile themſelues and beguile the world with a ſhew of learning, but God and good men doe deeme it want of learning. For ſo the Apoſtle teſtifieth: *If any man teach otherwiſe, and conſenteth not to the wholeſome words of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and to the doctrine which is according to godlineſſe, he is puft vp and knoweth nothing.* 1. Tim. 6. 3. Their skill, and readineſſe in this caſe to croſſe the truth, proueth not a ſpirituall growth, but a fleſhly groſſenes, they are not filled with grace, but ſwolne with carnall conceitednesse. *Vſe.*

Verſ. 14. *Shee ſitteth at the doore of her houſe, on a ſeate in the hie places of the Citie.*

HE continueth ſtill the allegorie, reſembling wickednesse to an harlot, whoſe propertie is to be abroad in the ſtreets to meete with companions, and to intice men to folly by her lookes and behauiour: which alſo ſinne doth by her ſubtilties to ſeduce mens ſoules. And yet ſhee goeth not as an ordinary ſtrumpet, or a vagabond, but taketh ſtate vpon her like a courtizan. Shee ſitteth on a ſeate in the ſtreet, which was wont to be a ſigne of honour, Iob 29. 7. And the word ſignifieth a

throne or chaire of eſtate, which were for Princes or principal perſons.

Doct. Great men vngratious, may be as ſinfull as any.

On a ſeate, &c.] Great men without grace bee as much ſubiect to ſinne and folly, as poore men. The Scripture confirmeth this, when it compareth ſuch kind of perſons to viler creatures: Pſal.49.20. *Man in honour which vnderſtandeth not, is like to beaſts that periſh.* He diſpraiſeth not all men of honour: for when wiſdome and dignitie meete together, the one is an ornament to the other: but thoſe that bee deſtitute of vnderſtanding, hee matcheth not with common men, or vileſt people, but maketh equall to the baſeſt kind of brutiſh beaſts.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, they haue the ſame roote and fountaine of corruption which is in all other men.

2 Secondly, they haue more allurements to induce them vnto euill than other men haue; their great abundance to draw them on to voluptuouſneſſe: their might and power to imbolden them to oppreſſion: there high degree, with the charmes and inchauntments of flatterers to make them high minded, and to keepe them from all humiliation, and repentance.

3 Thirdlie, Satan doth in a ſpeciall manner ſeeke to make a prey of them. For they bring whole flockes and flights of others into the net with them. Some they leade with counſell and company, and ſome they driue by force, and violence; and their example, and countenance doth bring ſinne into credit, whereby it is made exceeding infectious. In all which reſpects it was ſaid of *Reboboam*, the ſonne of *Nebat*, that he made Iſrael to ſinne.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction to ſuch as bee in eminent places, and are great perſonages, that they be as watchfull ouer their ſoules, as the vulgar ſort and meaneſt perſons. The aſſault of the diuell vpon them is certaine and forcible. Their owne ſtrength as ſmal, their ouerthrow as dangerous, and their puniſhment as grieuous. And therfore it is not a contemptible worke, and vnmeet for their places, to pray often, to heare the word, and exerciſe all other ſeruices of religion; vnleſſe it bee an honourable

ble thing to bee a ſlaue to Satan, and fit for their degree to periſh.

Confutation of their opinions, which ſo admire the ſtate of men of wealth and worſhip, as if euerie one that had power, and titles, were neceſſarily wiſe and happie: whereas here it appeareth, that folly doth ſo poſſeſſe many of them, that they arē wholly transformed into her, and in ſtead of being reputed reuerend, & wiſe men, they are called by the name of this fooliſh woman. The like in effect is ſpokē of them, Eccleſ. 10.6.7. *Folly is ſet in great excellencie, and ſeruants be riding on horſes*; when ſeruile men, whoſe hearts be in bondage to ſinfull luſts, attaine to greatneſſe. 2

In the high places, &c.] Aſſemblies and meetings of men bee ſeldome without the companie of ſinfulneſſe, and Satan. For hee will be one in the congregation of God, where they come together to pray againſt him, where the Lord ſtriketh at him, and woundeth him with his word: and therefore will more boldlie come to other aſſemblies, which bee onelie for ciuill affaires, and chiefely when they bee for ſinfull exerciſes, as may appeare by the effect of *Baal-Peors* Wake; Numb. 29. *Doct.* 2. Sinne and Satan frequent great aſſemblies.

Firſt, there be many to worke vpon: and therefore greater is the likelihood of ſucceſſe. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, there is vtterance and vent for many ſinnes which men vſe not to practiſe alone by themſelues: as ſwearing, lying, bragging, ſcoffing, railing, flatterie, and all kind of euill ſpeeches; beſides many actions, and geſtures, which be proper to companie. 2

Thirdly, he hath more helpes with him there, than when hee dealeth with one alone in ſecret. For, they that be peruerted ioyne with him to peruert others: and they which were bad before, are ſo made much worſe. It would haue bin hard to raiſe a rebellion againſt *Dauid*, if euery one had been ſingly ſolicited, before there was any aſſembly. 3

Inſtruction, not to walke ſtreets, or haunt much companie without due cauſe, and calling. It is righteous from God, that the diuell ſhould play the Marſhal to take vp them which *Vſe* 1.

ſtraggle

ſtraggle abroad without any warrant. And that was the cauſe of *Dinahs* woe, which would needs goe foorth to ſee faſhions: Gen.34.1.

When our occaſions do iuſtly call vs to ſuch places, that we prepare to preuent all perils: let the word of God bee in our hearts to keepe vs from ſinne, as wee would take preſeruatiues for our bodies, againſt the peſtilence, when the aire is infected. If the diuell caſt his fierie darts at vs, let faith bee readie to quench them: If folly intice vs with guilefull ſpeeches, let wiſdome ſhape her an anſwere, and ſend her packing.

Verſ.15. *To call them that paſſe by the way, that goe right on their way.*

THis is the end and purpoſe of her being in the ſtreetes, To doe miſchiefe there: not onelie to confirme and harden ſuch as be alreadie entred into leaud courſes, but to peruert and draw away thoſe that be inclined to any goodneſſe.

Doct. The diuell an vtter aduerſarie to all good endeauours.

So ſoone as any man beginneth to ſet himſelf to ſeeke God, the diuell and diuelliſh men will bee readie to turne him out of the way. So ſtood the caſe with the Corinthians, Galathians, and ſome other of the Churches: as ſoone as euer they imbraced the doctrine of the Apoſtles, preſentlie the falſe Apoſtles attempted to corrupt them: Gal.1.7.& 3.1. And ſo was *Paulus* the proconſull dealt with: Act.13.8. Whileſt *Paul* was preaching to him, *Elymas* was peruerting of him: whileſt the one built, the other battered, and pluckt down: whileſt the one laboured to make him a Chriſtian, the other indeauoured to keepe him an infidell, and vnbeleeuer.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, they bee enemies to the ſeaſt of wiſdome, maligning the glorie of the Goſpell, and the proſperous ſucceſſe of the ſame.

2 Secondlie, they be enemies to the meſſengers of wiſdome: thinking that they ſhall haue too much loue and reuerence yeelded to them, if men receiue comfort, and profit by their miniſtrie: Gal.4.17.

3 Thirdlie, they bee enemies to mankind, as touching the ſoule;

ſoule; repining that anie man ſhould bee in a better ſtate then themſelues (though themſelues refuſe to be in a good ſtate) according to the diſpoſition of their old father, who for the ſame cauſe ſo ſoone ſupplanted our firſt parents *Adam* and *Eue*.

Fourthly, they feele ſome preiudice to themſelues, by the departure of men from the ſeruice of Satan: they want their wonted companions, to ioyne with them in their wicked practiſes: beſides the blemiſh that cleaueth to them for vices, by meanes of the credit that accreweth to others by their vertue and goodneſſe. 4

Inſtruction, how to carrie our ſelues towards ſuch as bee nouices in religion. As wee come too ſhort of Chriſtian loue, if we be too ſuſpicious and ouermuch miſtruſtfull of their proceeding: ſo wee goe beyond the bounds of godlie diſcretion, if wee be too confident of them, and ſo expoſe our ſelues to perill. *Vſe* 1.

Secondly, to lay a good foundation, and to ſet on ſurelie, when we enter the poſſeſſion of Chriſtianitie, that our groundworke faile not in the time of triall; according to the example of the *wiſe man that buildeth his houſe on a Rocke, that though the raine fall, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat vpon that houſe, yet it may not fall:* Matth.7.24. For certaine it is, that the diuell by temptations, and our aduerſaries by oppoſitions will make manifeſt what firmeneſſe, and ſoundneſſe is in euerie one. Either they will Satanicallie aſſault vs with carnall perſwaſions, or elſe wee ſhall bee terrified with comminations and threatnings, or elſe wee ſhall bee derided with ſcoffes, and reproches, or we ſhall be traduced with falſe imputations, or wee ſhall bee diſquieted with wrongfull moleſtations. 2

Thirdly, that we ſhould be as induſtrious to lead men in the right way, as they be to call them out: and to helpe them out of the ſnares of the diuell, as they be to hold them in. For that is their ſinne, which they are forbidden to practiſe: this is our dutie which we are commanded to performe. Theirs is falſehood, and crueltie tending to hurt and miſchiefe: ours is faithfulneſſe 3

and mercie for good, and great profit. They bee the vaſſals of Satan, and inſtruments of his malice: wee bee the ſeruants of Chriſt, and miniſters of his graces: all the euill that they doe ſhall be puniſhed with their confuſion, all the good that we do ſhall be rewarded with glorie. Which *Daniel* confirmeth, foreſhewing the ſtate of both ſorts at the laſt day, that *ſome ſhall ariſe to euerlaſting life, and ſome to ſhame and perpetuall contempt. And they that make men wiſe, ſhall ſhine as the brightneſſe of the firmament: and they that turne manie to righteouſneſſe, ſhall ſhine as the ſtarres for euer, and euer:* Dan. 12. 2. 3.

Verſ. 16. *Who ſo is ſimple, let him come hither, and whoſoeuer is void of vnderſtanding, to him ſhe ſpeaketh.*

WHo ſo is ſimple, &c.] That is, which being ignorant diſcerneth not his blindneſſe, but hath conceit of wiſdome and knowledge.

Let him come hither, &c.] To the companie, counſell, and practiſe of Follie. *And to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding ſhee ſpeaketh*, *viz.* that haue no knowledge of their owne, nor bee willing to goe to Wiſedomes houſe to get anie.

Doct. They are eaſilie miſled that loue not to learne.

Ignorant perſons that regard not knowledge are the fitteſt praie for deceiuers: Epheſ. 4. 14. The Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Epheſians, perſwading them to knowledge, ſheweth the great neede thereof; *That wee henceforth bee no more children, wauering, and carried about with euerie winde of doctrine, by the deceit*, or *dice, of men.* Wherein hee declareth the dangerous caſe of ſuch as want vnderſtanding, by two ſimilitudes: one comparing them to little children, and the falſe teachers to craftie gameſters, that vſe to cogge at dice, who can eaſilie beguile a young boy, and ſtrippe him of all that hee plaieth for, though his whole inheritance lie vpon the game. The other comparing them to ſhips, that neither haue anchor to hold them, nor ſterne, and pilot to guide them; and therefore the tides, and tempeſts doe driue them euerie way without reſiſtance.

Firſt,

Firſt, they are alreadie taken by the diuell, and bee in his power, and therefore as vnable to eſcape the ſnares of his fowlers, as the birds that lie fluttering in the net: 2. Tim. 2.26. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, they are altogether deſtitute of all iudgement, nothing diſcerning truth from error, light from darkeneſſe, ſafetie from perill, and therefore may bee made to beleeue euerie thing. 2

Thirdly, their hearts and affections bee corrupted, and therefore corrupt counſel wil the more preuaile with them, and corrupt conuerſation bee more pleaſing to them. Such the Apoſtle deſcribeth, ſhewing that *they haue their cogitation darkned, and bee ſtrangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the hardneſſe of their heart. Which being paſt feeling, haue giuen themſelues vnto wantonneſſe, to worke all vncleanenеſſe, euen with greedineſſe*: Epheſ. 4.18.19. 3

Confutation of them that diſſwade men from ſeeking of knowledge, becauſe there bee ſo manie ſeducers that goe about to deceiue. It is dangerous dealing with Scriptures (ſay they) wee know not well whom to truſt, the world is ſo full of diſſemblers, and therefore wee will neither heare, nor beleeue anie Preacher of them all. But they will heare and beleeue Ieſuits, and Seminaries, and popiſh perſons that intice them to idolatrie and diſloyaltie: they will heare and beleeue gameſters, and filthie fellowes that will leade them to luſt, leaudneſſe, riot, and vnthriftineſſe: they will heare and beleeue ſuch as fill their eares with falſe reports, and poiſon their hearts with malice, couetouſneſſe, craft, and crueltie: as though there were no infectious people but Miniſters; no perill of contagion, but at ſermons; none ſubiect to bee miſſeled but ſuch as vſe the beſt meanes to know the right way. But conſider the force of their reaſon whereby they would induce men to perſiſt in their blindnes: There be many ſlips, and much counterfeit mettall, and therefore no vſe of a touch-ſtone: there is poiſon prepared for vs, and therefore beware of preſeruatiues: our enemies come armed againſt vs, and therefore let *Vſe.*

vs caſt away our weapons: their purpoſe is to ſurpriſe vs in the darke, and therefore put out at anie hand all the light in the houſe. What is it but wiſedome that doth inable vs to trie all things, and to hold that which is good? What is it but knowledge that doth deſcrie the venome of all peſtiferous, and peſtilent opinions? What is it but vnderſtanding that doth diſcouer the dangerous occurrents that will inſue vpon pernicious counſell? For other vſes of this point, ſee verſ.10.Doct.2.

Verſ.17. *Stollen waters are ſweete, and hid bread is pleaſant.*

THis verſe containeth an euent that followeth their yeelding to Follies allurements, that at the firſt they find delight and pleaſure, and great contentation in their intertainement.

Hee alludeth, as it ſeemeth, to the diſorders that are wont to be in harlots houſes, wherein at the meeting of companions they vſe to haue a feaſt, and all the prouiſion is of ſtollen ſtuffe. Either ſeruants filch from their maſters, or otherwiſe they ſteale from their neighbours, hennes, and geeſe, and duckes, and connies, and veniſon, and ſuch things as they can come by: which is called hid food, becauſe as they cannot iuſtifie it, ſo they dare not let it bee ſeene, but dreſſe it couertly, and eate it ſecretly in the midſt of the night in the moſt inward and cloſeſt roome of the whole houſe. And whatſoeuer is ſo gotten, and there made readie is verie delicious vnto them, though it were but bread and water.

Doct. Things the more vnlawfull, the better liked of bad men.

Thoſe things that bee moſt vnlawfull doe beſt ſatisfie the humors of vnregenerate men. Though Wiſdome make a feaſt of meates that bee daintie and wholeſome, and prepare ſpiced cups, with wine that is ſweete and delicate, yet ſhee hath few gueſts that will viſit her table: but let Folly prouide only bread and water (which they muſt alſo eat in a corner, and hide their heads like malefactors) and ſhee ſhall haue great ſtore that will flocke to her houſe, and accept of her cheere with very good liking. In this ſenſe it is ſaid, Chap. 20.17. That *the bread*

of

of deceit is ſweete to a man. The vnrighteous trade and courſe of getting is to manie a kinde of ſauce to procure a reliſh to their poſſeſſions. They eſteeme euerie thing to bee ſo much the more worth, if a craftie head, a violent hand, a guilefull tongue, or anie fraudulent meanes hath brought it vnto them.

The ſame proportion holdeth in all other caſes. How manie bee carried with brutiſh luſts and affections to ſtrange fleſh, that haue nothing in them of beautie, and in the meane time loath their owne wiues which bee well fauoured, perſonable, and comely? and who almoſt taketh delight in anie recreation which is neither vnſeaſonable in reſpect of the time, nor yet vnwarrantable in regard of the manner? It is altogether too freſh and vnſauourie for their taſt, vnleſſe the Diuell powder it with ſome enormous abuſes.

And hence it proceedeth, for that all which is fleſhly and moſt contrarie to the ſpirit of God, is alwaies acceptable to them that be fleſhly, and moſt agreeable to the corrupt nature of man. And ſo ſaith the Apoſtle: Rom.8 5. *They that are after the fleſh, ſauour the things of the fleſh.* And it falleth out in this caſe, as it doth in the infirmities of the body, euerie maladie doth deſire that which will feede and maintaine it: as it is to bee ſeene in cholericke perſons, and ſuch as bee inclining to the dropſie; the one ſort beſt liking meate that increaſeth choler, the other thirſting ſtill after drinke, whereby the dropſie is nouriſhed. *Reaſon.*

Confutation of Poperie, that hath diſhes for euerie carnall mans diet, the whole bodie of it tending to ſenſualitie. Euerie ſenſe is thereby fed with fleſhly delights, inſomuch, as anie infidell may be greatly refreſhed therewith, and yet not led one ſtep neerer to ſaluation. And as it is for euerie mans turne, readie to ſatisfie their carnall humors, ſo men be of their owne accord verie ſtrongly and vehementlie affected to it. It is as naturall for them to bee ſuperſtitious, as it is for nettles, and thiſtles, and other weedes to grow without ſowing or ſetting. *Vſe 1.*

And this is the cauſe why men bee ſo hardlie reclaimed from it, and ſo eaſily vpon weake reaſons readie to reuolt backe vnto it.

2 Inſtruction, that the ſpirituall delights of the word doe repell the carnall luſt of the world, and the comforts of heauenly things doe ſwallow vp the pleaſures of all earthly vanities. For vnleſſe our hearts bee well fenced againſt them by grace, they will returne to their natiue home, and take poſſeſſion of their ancient habitation.

3 Thirdlie, conſolation to them that diſtruſt theſe fleſhlie delights, which bee ſo pleaſing to other mens appetites: it argueth that they haue been well fed at Wiſedomes feaſt, and that is the cauſe why their ſtomacks can no better digeſt the voluptuous meſſes of Folly. It is a cleare caſe that no man can loath the inchanted meate that Satan and ſinne haue dreſſed, but ſuch as haue been nouriſhed by the bread of life, which Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe hath prepared.

Verſ. 18. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her gueſts are in the depth of hell.*

HEre followeth another euent inſuing vpon the former; that as they had pleaſure at the firſt, ſo they muſt haue paine at the laſt: as their intertainement was with delight, ſo ſhall their reckoning bee with deſtruction. It is ſaid, *he knoweth not*: that is, euerie one of them that be tractable to her call, haue the perill of their ſtate hid from their eies.

That the dead are there, &c.] That all that giue themſelues to ſuch courſes are ſtrangers from the life of God, and in the power of the firſt death; and *in the depth of hell*, that is, are as certaine to bee damned in the world to come (vnleſſe God giue them repentance) as if they were alreadie in hell fire.

Doct. Sin the more pleaſing, the

According as euerie ſinne is more delightfull, ſo is it more dangerous and deceitfull. The ſweete meates of wickednesſe will haue the ſower ſauce of wretchednesſe and miſerie. Sinnefulneſſe

ſulneſſe will be the bane of tranſgreſſors, as the harlot is commonly of adulterers. It is the holy Prouerbe of God, that when *the bread of deceit is ſweete to the taſte, it turneth to grit, and gravell*, to the torment of the teeth: Chap. 20. 17. more pernicious.

Firſt, as it appeareth heere, men bee willingly ignorant of the euils to come, when their deſires bee ſatisfied for the preſent. Which thing our Sauiour doth alſo intimate by the example of the old world: when once they gaue ouer themſelues to profit, and pleaſure (as feaſting, and marrying, and planting, and building, and traffiquing) they knew nothing til the flood came, though *Noah* had foretold them aboue an hundred yeeres together. *Reaſon* 1. Mat. 24. 39.

Secondly, when they bee poſſeſt with the delights of ſinne, they are with much difficultie brought to leaue them. As *Zophar* ſheweth: Iob. 20 12. &c. That *when wickedneſſe is ſweete in their mouthes; they will fauour it, and not forſake it till it turne to a poiſon in their bowels.* 2

Thirdly, in reſpect of the preſent condition of voluptuous perſons, *which liue in pleaſure, that they are dead whileſt they liue:* 1. Tim. 5. 6. They are ſenſible carcaſes, and breathing carrions. For though they haue a reaſonable ſoule which maketh them to bee men, yet they want the ſpirit of grace which maketh them to be Chriſtians. 3

Fourthly, in regard of their future miſerie: for which Saint *Iames* wiſheth them *to weepe, and houle, and make all kind of lamentation.* For howſoeuer all reprobates ſhall be damned, yet they ſhall ſinke to the bottome of terrors and torments in hell, that haue riſen vp to the top of pleaſures, and curſed proſperitie on earth. 4

Inſtruction, firſt, to foreſee that which will follow, when baites are laid for vs by Satan or wicked men, and account the threatnings of God as certaine as executions; and feare the plagues to follow hereafter, as if wee were forthwith to feele them. *Vſe* 1.

Secondly, that no example preuaile ſo farre as to draw vs into a wicked way. Conſider not what they bee in outward appearance

pearance that dwell in Follies house, but what their state is presentlie by Gods testimonies, and how they shall find it hereafter by their owne experience.

3 Thirdly, that wee illude not our owne hearts, by hoping to shift for one: for neuer anie could auoide the punishment by shifting. Sinne maketh sure worke with all her guests to giue them their deadlie wound at the entrance: so that death waits on Folly to take them presently at her hands, and hel followeth death, to receiue them afterwards at his hands.

AN.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE TENTH CHAPTER OF THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER X.

THE PARABLES OF SALOMON.

Verſ. 1. *A wiſe ſonne maketh a glad Father: but a fooliſh ſonne is a heauineſſe to his mother.*

Parables. That is, wiſe and graue ſentences written by *Salomon*, but inſpired by the Spirit of God, for the information of the mind, and the inſtitution of the life, according to the rules of Wiſdome, Iuſtice, and Piety. The other nine Chapters being prefixed as a preface to theſe, contained a continued diſcourſe, wherein the commendation of Wiſedome, and the exhortations to many good duties were proſecuted with varietie of arguments: whereas in theſe that follow, for the moſt part, are ſet downe brieſe ſayings, euery verſe almoſt comprehending a whole point in it ſelfe, not growing vpon dependance of that which went before, nor miniſtring the occaſion of that which commeth after. Yet ſometimes it falleth out otherwiſe, and diuers verſes together haue dependance one with another, as will appeare in ſome place of this preſent Chapter. *A wiſe ſonne*, that is, a vertuous and towardly ſonne or daughter, *maketh a ioyfull father*, or mother: *and a fooliſh ſon*, that is, a ſinful and vngracious child, *is an heauineſſe*, and griefe to his mother or father: yet it is not without cauſe that the mo-

ther is rather put in the latter clauſe, than the father: for that ſex is the weaker, and more impatient of ſuch a croſſe: and vſuallie contemptuous children bee bolder to contemne the mother then the father, as Chap. 15.20. *A fooliſh man deſpiſeth his mother*; as *Rebeccah* was more troubled with *Eſau* then *Iſaac* was: and very often the mothers by too much indulgence and fondneſſe are meanes of their childrens vices; and ſo it is ſaid, *A childe ſet at libertie maketh his mother aſhamed*: Chap. 29.15.

Doctr. A good ſonne makes a glad father.

The comfort or ſorrow of parents ſtandeth much in the behauiour of their children. This is euident by the example of *Iacobs* ſonnes: whereof *Ioſeph*, a gratious child, was neuer but a refreſhing to him: but *Simeon*, and *Reuben*, and *Leui*, and moſt of the reſt, by their ſinfull actions did fill him with griefe and afflictions: and ſo had *Dauid* experience both waies, being pearced with ſorrow on the one ſide, by the villanous practiſes and miſerable ends of *Abſolon* and *Ammon*: and abounding with ioy on the other ſide for the ſingular wiſedome of *Salomon*.

Reaſon.

Firſt, theſe affections doe proceede from the loue that godly parents doe beare vnto God, that thinking all too little that is done in his ſeruices, they haue now helpers euen out of their owne loines, that will ioyne with them in the ſame: and when they haue finiſhed their courſe and ended their owne daies worke, yet the worke ſhall ſtill bee continued by their poſteritie. We ſee in humane affaires, that euerie good ſubiect will be glad to breede vp a ſonne that will bee fit and able to ſerue his Soueraigne: and how can it then but cheere vp the hart and refreſh the ſpirits of Chriſtian fathers or mothers, to haue their children the Lords Souldiers, valiantly fighting his battailes againſt ſinne and Satan, and that in their owne ſight and preſence? Euery good maſter, as was *Abraham*, wil think it a benefit to haue his ſeruants to be the ſeruants of the Lord: and euery Chriſtian will gladly heare of godly men in another familie, in another towne, in another countrie, in another kingdome; and therefore much more will religious parents be rauiſhed with ioy to ſee with their owne eies the feare of God

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in their owne houſes, in their owne children, by the bleſſing of God vpon their owne gouernment and praiers: but they cannot but conceiue as great griefe by the ſinfulneſſe of impious children, which wholly caſt off the yoke of all holy obedience, that deſpight him whom they themſelues honor, & blaſpheme that name which they ſanctifie, and reiect that word which their ſoules do liue by. The Propets eyes guſhed out with riuers of waters, becauſe ſtrangers and aliants, and euen his verie enemies obſerued not the commandements of God: and therefore much more would he haue mourned when his owne ſons rebelled againſt them. Pſal. 119. 136.

Secondly, loue to the people of God will worke gladneſſe, when faithfull men diſcerne their children to bee inclining to goodneſſe. For they are growing to bee fruitfull plants in the Lords orchard: and ſo, many ſhall haue profit by them many waies; where as the wicked are as thornes and bryars, and noyſome brambles. 2

Thirdly, the happy condition of gracious and godly children themſelues, doth procure to the parents much conſolatiõ: for beſides their ſpirituall promotion and dignitie, being made the ſonnes of God, and kingly heires of euerlaſting glory, the fauour and bleſſing of God doth vſually appeare towards them for the things of this life: when rebellious and wicked children haue the curſe of God vpon them, doing miſchiefe and hurt, and receiuing the reward of it by ſhame and infamie, by debts and arearages, by flight and lurking, by bonds and impriſonment, and oftentimes by an ignominious death and deſtruction. 3

Fourthly, wiſe children yeeld matter of comfort to their parents, in being officious vnto them, and vſing all good behauiour towards them: for they are moſt forward to obey their commandements, they are moſt cheerefull to relieue their neceſſities; they are moſt faithfull and prouident to preſerue their life, and health, and welfare, In which reſpect the Scripture compareth them to arrowes or any other weapons, whereby men may bee defended: Pſal. 127. 4. And as they are preſt and readie to performe euery duty that is required of them: ſo will 4

they also carefully regard their parents dealings towards them: the father giueth counsell, and the sonne is directed by it: the father giueth rebuke, and the sonne trembleth at it: the father giueth correction, and the sonne doth humbly submit himselfe vnto it. Now at the hands of a fooliſh child what is to be expected but folly, contempt of commandements and counsell, murmuring against admonition and reproofes, resistance against correction and chastisements? If their parents bee in want, they are ashamed of them, and thinke it an intolerable burthen to bee charged with them; and so shorten their daies by opprobrious and hard vsage: if they haue wealth, they seeke to make a spoile of them; if they bee like to leaue them patrimony or inheritance, no enemie doth so much desire their death; if they bee simple, and want vnderstanding, they either vse contemptuously to checke and snib them, or else to mocke and deride them; if they declare their wisedome and true piety, they shew their bitternesse against their godly zeale and sincere profession.

Vse. 1. Instruction. First, to children, to take it as a motiue to stirre them vp & prouoke them to Christian conuersation. That they shal minister comfort to their parents, & pleasure themselues, and please the Lord; for all those concurre and meete together in one. The sonne doth neuer giue iust occasion of gladnesse to his father, but hee hath a iust cause to bee glad for his owne sake; because God hath so seasoned him with grace, and made him acceptable to his friends, and vouchsafed vnto him his owne fauour: Whereas on the contrary side, when the parents are much grieued for the childes misdemeanors, the childe ought to bee more grieued for his owne wretchednesse; for he shall be most punished for his rebellion. Secondly, to parents; that forasmuch as their childrens vice or vertue, is their woe or welfare, therefore they doe their best indeuour to haue their seede to be vertuous and holy. And hee that will doe this, must lay the foundation of being a comfortable father, before hee bee a father, and take the way to haue good children before hee haue children: and that is by a due care that himselfe doe marrie in the Lord, that hee propose such an

How a man may be a ioyfull father.

end,

end, and vſe ſuch proceeding, and match with ſuch a wife, as will bring the bleſſing of God vpon his houſe and poſteritie. Secondly, if he be deſirous that his children ſhould yeelde him the crop of comfort, he muſt beſtow vpon them the ſeede of inſtruction, and the tillage of good education. Thirdly, great care is to be had for the wiſe and orderly diſpoſing of them in mariage, that all the former hopes be not cut off through the neglect of this duty. For diuers times good people in this regard are like to corne that proſpereth wel in the blade, but afterwards is either blaſted or withered in the eare. Many ingenious and towardly yong men and maidens haue been vtterly ouerthrowne by coupling themſelues to prophane yoke fellowes, and being ingrafted into ſinfull families.

Reproofe of thoſe that take leſt care to get wiſedome for 2
their children, but onely labour to prouide them wealth, and thereby they are made idle, and proud, and vnthrifty, and prepared to waſte with riot all that they haue gotten with care and trauell. And yet they be far worſe, and altogether vnworthy of the name of fathers, that grieue at the graces of their children, and reſtraine them from al the meanes whereby they might attaine vnto knowledge and wiſedome.

Conſolation to them that be inriched with this treaſure of 3
good children, howſoeuer the world goeth with them in their ſtate otherwiſe. If they be wealthie and ſtored with poſſeſſions, they haue ſuch to leaue them vnto, as are fitted for them, and know how to vſe them, and are like long to enioy them: Whereas many parents do leaue portions that are better then the children to whom they are bequeathed: and the good creatures of God are put into the hands of vnworthy men, who are therefore vnable long to retaine them. If they bee poore and deſtitute of other riches and maintenance, yet the want of things of leſſe value is ſupplied by that which is of more worth, one good childe is better then many wedges of gold: and no earthly inheritance is ſo faire a demaines, as a religious ſeede which God doth giue in goodneſſe, and by his owne teſtimony commendeth, as a bleſſing that maketh a man to be happy: as hee ſaith, Pſ. 127, 3, 4. *As are the arrowes in the hand of a ſtrong man,*

ſo are the children of youth. Bleſſed is the man that hath his quiuer full of them.

Verſ. 2. *The treaſures of wickednesſe profit nothing: but righteouſneſſe deliuereth from death.*

THE *treaſures of wickednesſe.*] That is, the greateſt abundance of wealth which is euill gotten, and euill vſed, or poſſeſſed by an euil owner, *profit nothing:* doe him no good at any time; but leaſt of all at his death, or in time of miſery; for ſo it is intended by the *Antitheſis*, & expreſſed, Cha. 11.14. *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath, but righteouſneſſe*; that is, vprightneſſe of heart, and holineſſe of behauiour, *deliuereth from death*; that is, from deſtruction, and al other hurtfull dangers. Yet not by any merit of man, but by the mercy of God through Ieſus Chriſt.

Doct. Wicked mens wealth doth them no good.

The riches of iniquity.] No wicked worldling is any thing the better for his wealth: which thing the Prophet *Dauid* had wel conſidered of, and therefore confidently affirmeth, Pſal. 39.6. *Doubtleſſe* (ſaith he) *man walketh by a vaine image, he heapeth vp riches, and can not tell who ſhall gather them.* He ſpeaketh not of a particular, as though ſome one man were falne into that errour, but of the whole body of mankinde, in that caſe as they are deſcended from *Adam*. Euery man that hath nothing but the nature of man doth take a ſhew for a ſubſtance, the image in the glaſſe, for the face repreſented by it: the picture of happineſſe which is painted on riches, for true and ſolide felicity: and therefore they miſſe of that which they make moſt account of. For they haue gathered together goods, and others ſhal gather the good comfort and fruit of them: and whether they haue prouided for their owne, or for aliants; for friends or for foes, they are altogether vncertaine.

But if it be ſaid, that thus far it profiteth them to be wealthy, that they eate and drinke, and liue thereby: our Sauiour anſwereth, that no mans life conſiſteth in the abundance of his riches: doe not poore men liue alſo? are not ſheepe, and kine, and al other cattell nouriſhed?

Luk. 12.15.

Obiect. But they fare better then others; and in that reſpect they

they haue a commoditie in their wealth aboue others.

Anſwere. But better fare doth not make their eſtate better: it helpeth not their health, it ſweetneth not their ſleepe, it refreſheth not their harts, it furthereth them to no good ſeruice. That meate doth a man good which inciteth him to prayer, and thankfulneſſe, which mooueth him to compaſſion and mercie, and maketh him able and readie to exerciſe euery good dutie in his calling. Eccleſ.5.11.

Reaſons 1. First, the ſtore and plentie of riches and poſſeſſions doth nothing helpe the ſtate of vnrighteous men in the time of their proſperitie; for that which they haue is none of their owne: they haue neither right nor vſe of any thing that is about them, Iſai.61.5. They plow other mens grounds, and plant other mens orchards, and keep other mens cattell, and become other mens drudges. For ſo to the comfort of his people doth the Lord himſelfe profeſſe, who appointeth to euery one his taske, and deſtinateth his worke to the purpoſe of his owne will: *The ſtrangers ſhall ſtand and feede your ſheepe, and the ſonnes of ſtrangers ſhall be your plowmen, and dreſſers of your vines*, Iſai.61.5. Iſai.61.5.

And for this cauſe the Prophet *Habaccuck* doth crie out ſhame vpon their follie, when they thinke themſelues to bee very wiſe and prudent: *Ho, he that increaſeth that which is not his, and he that ladeth himſelfe with thicke clay.* They make themſelues pack-horſes, or at leaſt ſeruile porters which bow their backes to other mens burdens; and ſhall be recompenced only with feeling the weight of the ſame. Or let the beſt be made of it, and be it their owne, yet their owne is nothing but a loade of heauie morter. And this were well, if this were all: but the worſt remaineth to bee ſpoken of, namelie, their burdens of wicked treaſures bee as it were bags or purſes obtained by ſtealth, or robberie, which will therefore bring their liues into perill. Hab.2.6.

Secondly, the abundance of outward things cannot ſuccour them in the time of their calamitie: for ſo the Prophet threatneth; *Neither their ſiluer nor their gold ſhall bee able to deliuer them in the day of the Lords wrath:* Zeph.1.18. If their danger grew from the heate of mens wrath, there might bee hope that

wealth

wealth would helpe them: for either a ſumme of mony would quench the flame of the aduerſaries diſpleaſure, or kindle courage in ſome others to defend them. But now that God is prouoked againſt them, it is in vaine to offer gold or ſiluer to pacifie him, or to ranſome themſelues: for hee ſtandeth in no
Pſalm.49.7. neede of them, hee admireth them not as men doe, and they be his alreadie, and at his owne will to bee diſpoſed of. Then to oppoſe them againſt him, in way of reſiſtance, it were abſurd: for there is no power in them to doe vs good without
Pſal.62.10.11. him: and much leſſe therefore to maintaine any man againſt him. Nay they bee ſo farre from aiding ſinfull men againſt the hand of God, as that they bee many times weapons in their hands to plague them with ſtroakes of iudgement. It hath neuer been heard that the purſe hath preſerued the man from the ſword of the robber, or the cheſt from the aſſault of the theefe: but the contrarie falleth out often, that men bee made a ſpoile for their monie, and brought to ruine; as a tree that hath great bowes and a little roote is ouerturned in a mightie tempeſt. But then eſpecially doth wealth bring woe to wicked men, when God awaketh their conſciences, to behold their owne crueltie and falſehood, and the heauie puniſhment now readie to be inflicted vpon them for the ſame. This was *Iudas* his caſe, and ſuch the Prophet ſpeakes of, Ezech.7.19. *They ſhall caſt their ſiluer into the ſtreetes, and their gold ſhall be caſt a farre off.* That which was deareſt to their hearts before, and brought them to ſinne, they remoue furtheſt from them now, when they feele the ſorrow of it. And beſides this, although riches had ſome greater vertue, and power in themſelues, yet they could ſtand vngodly men in no ſtead, becauſe they ceaſe when miſerie beginneth: when death commeth to men, and they come before the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt, the wicked haue horrible ſorrowes and terrors vpon them, and all their wealth and ſubſtance is fled from them.

This their ſtate is foreſhewne in the Scriptures, as euidentlie as if it were preſent, or a thing paſt, ſeene perfectly accompliſhed in euery point. For ſo the Apoſtle witneſſeth in the re-
Reue.6.15.16. uelation: *The Kings of the earth, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines*

Captaines, and the mightie men, and euerie bondman, and euerie free man, hid themſelues in dennes, and among the rockes of the mountaines, and ſaid to the mountaines and rocks, fall on vs, and hide vs from the preſence of him that ſitteth on the throne, & from the wrath of the lambe.

Inſtruction. That we neuer corrupt our hearts or peruert our waies to increaſe our eſtate, and augment our wealth. This maketh a wound, but miniſtreth no plaiſter to heale it. It will aſſuredly bring trouble and affliction, but neuer anie ſtrength and abilitie, either to preuent or to beare it. And therefore it ſhall bee our wiſedome to foreſee the euents that will enſue vpon any vnlawfull courſe of gaining. We would not willingly enter into an houſe viſited with the peſtilence though great cheere were prouided for vs. Wee would not put on infectious apparrell though they were made of ſilke or ſatten, or ſtuffes that were deareſt. And ſhall we be more prouident for the bodie then for the ſoule? Nay, for bodie ſinglie, more then for bodie and ſoule together? Nay for meere bodie, more then for bodie and ſoule, and ſtate, and name, and ſeede and poſteritie? For, iniquitie will bring a curſe vpon all theſe, and goods preſerue not one of them.

Terror to the wicked that thriue by iniuſtice, as vſurie, oppreſſion, or anie indirect meanes of getting. Euerie good man may ſay of them, as *Iob* did ſay in the like caſe: *Let the counſell of the wicked be farre from me:* their candle will bee put out, and diſtruction will come vpon them, vnleſſe they breake off their iniuſtice: All their commoditie is to them, as the bait vnto the fiſh, with the hooke: as the corne that is ſcattered for the birds vnder the net, and as the ſweete ſops that are ſet for the rats with poiſon. Iob. 21. 16.

But righteouſneſſe, &c.] The goodneſſe of a Chriſtian will worke him that happineſſe which no outward goods could euer procure. This was the meſſage that *Habbaccuck* was to deliuer to the people of God, to confirme them againſt the dangerous inuaſion of the Babylonians. That the righteous ſhould liue by his faith. It is oppoſed to the proud conceits of the wicked on both ſides. The high minded Chaldeans intended to

Doct. 2. A Chriſtian mans happineſſe conſiſteth in his grace, not in his goods. Hab. 2. 4.

deſtroy all, and the ſtubborne hearted Iewes preſumed to eſcape al deſtruction. Now the Lord ſhewed that neither ſide of them ſhould haue their wils. For the faithfull ſhould bee deliuered from death, or the euill of it, notwithſtanding all the power and weapons of the Babylonians. And onely the faithfull had aſſurance of happie deliuerance, notwithſtanding all the armour and riches of the Iſraelites.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, the efficacie of the Spirit, and the merit of Chriſt doth free them from the firſt death, and giue them a part in the firſt reſurrection. For the ſtate of the Epheſians is for this purpoſe propoſed, that it may bee a paterne of the condition of all other Chriſtians: *You hath he quickned that were dead in treſpaſſes and ſinnes*, Epheſ. 2.1.

2 Secondly, the prouidence and power of God doth ſhield them from the hurtfull ſword, which would bring them to an vntimely end. And they can at all times open heauen gates by the key of prayer, and haue acceſſe to God in all diſtreſſes. *Haman* was ſtored with riches, and aduanced to dignitie, and backed with great friends: and yet on a ſuddaine with the turning of an hand, his life, and power, and whole eſtate was ouerturned. And *Mordecay* was a poore man, a captiue, maligned and condemned, and came ſo neere to the iawes of death, that after a ſort it breathed vpon him: yet being a righteous man, and crying to the Lord, he obtained a glorious deliuerance. *Iehoſaphat* ſeemed to be in as great perill as *Ahab*, and *Ahab* was of as great wealth as *Iehoſaphat*, yet God gaue direction to the hand of one archer, vnwittingly to ſhoote, and to the arrow to light vpon him, and to finde a chinke in his armour, and to hit him in ſuch a place, as thorow which it pearced to his life. And contrariwiſe hee perſwaded the hearts of manie others, who preſſed vpon *Iehoſaphat* to withdraw their hands, and to let him alone in ſafetie.

Thirdly, the death of Ieſus Chriſt hath ſo plucked out the ſting, and taken away the venome of their naturall death, as that it is conuerted into a quiet and comfortable reſt.

Fourthly, the Reſurrection of Ieſus Chriſt ſhall at the laſt day ſubdue and deſtroy this death, that now holdeth their bodies

dies in the graue, and death ſhall die, and they ſhall liue in immortalitie and euerlaſting bleſſednesse.

Inſtruction to euerie one to get a ſure poſſeſſion of ſound and vnfained righteouſneſſe, ſuch as will hold weight in the ballance of Gods righteouſneſſe, before his iudgement ſeate: and therefore let him obſerue theſe three generall rules which bee effectuall and neceſſarie. Firſt, that he put off the old man, with the carnall reaſon and ſhewes thereof: diſclaiming, for authentick and allowable goodnes, all counterfeit, naturall and ciuill vertues, and bee clothed with Chriſt and his merits, and ſanctified with his holy Spirit, Phil.3.9.10. Secondly, that he make a narrow ſearch to finde out all his ſinnes, and that with godly ſorrow and repentance for the ſame: obtaining alſo pardon and remiſſion for them, through the blood of Ieſus Chriſt. Thirdly, that he make a conſcience, conſtantly, and totally to walke in the commandements of God, endeuouring to pleaſe him in all things. For hee that leaueth off well dooing in the end, ſhall looſe all the comfort of his beginning. And he that is content to ſerue God but in a part, may be ſuſpected to ſerue him ſoundly in no part. *Vſe 1.*

Conſolation to them that haue attained to this righteouſneſſe, and be furniſhed with it, in heart and behauiour: they are thorowlie armed not onely with the breaſtplate, but with the whole and complete armor of God, againſt Satan and all his forces. And ſo likewiſe are they in ſafetie from the perill of all places; the violence of all perſons, and the terrors of all times and ſeaſons. When they are in health they neede not to feare ſickneſſe: when they are ſicke, they neede not to feare death: when they are to die, they neede not to dreade the danger of damnation. 2

Verſ.3. *The Lord will not famiſh the ſoule of the righteous: but he caſteth away the ſubſtance of the wicked.*

THeſe words bee inferred vpon the former, as an anſwer to a ſecret obiection, that might be made againſt them: Why ſhould it bee thought that men get no good by gathering ri-

ches in what manner soeuer? They stand them in steade in time of dearth and scarcitie; when others that want them, though neuer so iust, are like to perish. Now here hee sheweth the case to bee otherwise. Good men are not vnprouided of foode because they are vnfurnished with wealth: and sinfull men haue no assurance of prouision though they haue riches: *for the Lord will not famish the soules of the righteous*, that is, will not suffer the men themselues to starue, though they haue neuer so little: *But will cast away the substance of the wicked*, that is, hee will depriue them of the possession, or vse, or vertue of it when they are in greatest neede.

Doct. A poore Christian better then a rich worldling.

The Lord will not, &c.] Poore Christians bee in better estate then wealthie wicked men, euen in respect of bodily prouision and maintenance. Such a comparison is made, Psalm. 34. 10. that *Lions*, that is, mightie, strong, and boysterous men *suffer hunger, and sustaine want* (as was notablie seene in the case of *Nabuchadnezzer*, who in the midst of his greatest power, his ample dominions, and large possessions, was yet turned a grazing like a beast, amongst the beasts): *But they that seeke the Lord shall want nothing that is good.* They may sometimes bee without that which they wish for, because they may wish for that which will not well agree with their safetie. But whatsoeuer is good, and their neede requireth it, that shall vndoubtedly be ministred vnto them.

Obiect. But may not a godly man die of hunger? shall wee condemne all that are affamished?

Answ. There is no doubt but manie men, euen faithfull seruants of God in sieges, & extreame dearths, &c. be brought to their ends, through penurie and want of food: but then it is good for them so to come to their end. The Lord doth call them home to heauen by such a messenger. In the like sense it is said in the former Psalm. 34. 20. *That not one of their bones is broken*, that is, to their hurt, or through neglect of Gods prouident care ouer them. But one may haue his bones broken, and be hewed or sawed a sunder, in great mercy, *Heb.* 11. 37. So there is a promise to Gods people to perserue them from the pestilence, *Psal.* 91. 7. and yet manie blessed saints bee taken away

away by it to euerlaſting glory. Elſe *Dauid* would not haue giuen them that teſtimony, who ſo died at that time, calling them poore harmeleſſe ſheep; or haue offred himſelfe to that kind of death to preſerue them aliue. The meaning is then, that religious men ſhall neuer bee plagued with the venome and ſting of ſcarcitie and famine, hauing it executed as a curſe vpon them; as it falleth out with ſinners.

First, they haue the good prouidence of God continually for them: his eyes are open to ſee their neede, his eares are open to heare their praiers, his hand is open to relieue their neceſſities, his treaſurie and rich ſtore-houſe is open and able to ſupply all their wants. They haue his loue and fauour, they haue his power and ſufficiencie, they haue his word and promiſe, they haue his truth and fidelitie, that he will neuer faile them, Heb. 13.5. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, the wealthy miſers of the world haue the hand of God againſt them, to conſume that which they haue augmented, to ſcatter that which they haue gathered together, and to caſt away that as a curſed thing, which they haue laid vp as a precious treaſure. They truſt not in him, but make that their hope; and therefore hee will make that to deceiue them when they haue greateſt neede of helpe. They doubt not but it ſhall goe well with them, when others be in extremitie; and therefore they ſhall bee brought into ſtraits, when it ſhall goe well with others. And ſo much the rather, becauſe they doe not onely glorie in their wealth, and liſt vp themſelues aboue poore Chriſtians; but arme themſelues therewith, and make it a weapon of oppreſſion. 2

Conſolation to good men that haue inward ſtore of grace, though their outward ſtate of money, or other ſubſtance bee verie ſlender and ſmall: And though their friends ſhould alſo faile as well as their wealth, yet they bee neither deſtitute of friendſhip or welfare. Becauſe the Lord himſelfe is all-ſufficient in himſelfe, and moſt neerely vnited, and knit vnto them by the bond of fatherhood. The Prophet profeſſed and publiſhed his aſſurance to all the world, that hee *ſhould want nothing*; in this regard, that *God was his ſheepheard*. Pſal. 23.1. And *Vſe* 1.

how can hee possibly then bee forlorne, that hath him to his father? Euen wicked men will be tender of their children, and the Beares and Dragons will be carefull of their young ones: *Lament.* 4.3. and shall the God of all goodnesse withdraw his hand to helpe his sonnes and daughters? especially sithence he reacheth it out to minister foode to euerie liuing creature, and amongst them to his verie enemies? and from his owne kindnesse, he can bow mens affections to be kinde, and make their verie enemies friends, and friendly vnto them. And let that fall out that the times should bee hard, and the prices of victuals high, yet Gods store is not diminished, nor his plentie abated; but he can afford his familie sufficient allowance, as well in the deerest yeares, as when things bee at the cheapest. And then indeed his prouidence is most seene, and his goodnesse most felt, and the truth of his word most cleerely manifested: For so he promiseth, Psal. 37.16. *They shall not be confounded in the perilous times, and in the daies of famine they shall haue enough.* Whereof *Iacob* had experience in a speciall maner: he neuer fared better then in the yeares of dearth: when all others wanted, he abounded: when the Egyptians themselues that sowed the corne were readie to perish for want of corne, he with his household was plentuously prouided for amongst them, and that for nothing.

2 Terror for them whose whole happinesse doth hang on their riches; though they bee full now, they may quickely bee emptied: and though they seeme to want nothing, the curse of God may speedily bring them to bee destitute of euerie thing. So did *Mary* sing by the Spirit of God in her song of reioicing, Luke 1.53. *He hath filled the hungrie with good things, & the rich he hath sent emptie away.* And so did *Hanna* also praise the Lord for the same, 1. Sam. 2.5. *They that were full, are hired forth for bread, and the hungrie are no more hired.* A great alteration was made in their states on both sides. The poore which laboured in other mens worke for wages, were sufficiently prouided for at home, and the rich and wealthie which were masters ouer manie, were compelled by neede to frame themselues to be other mens seruants.

Verſ.4. *A deceitfull hand maketh poore: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

THis verſe alſo containeth an anſwer to an other obiection, which might riſe out of the wordes immediately going before. If food and maintenance be the gift of God, and they that haue little ſhall be kept from want, & they that haue great ſtore ſhall be ſtript of all; to what end ſhould men trauaile and take paines? the wiſeſt way is to giue ouer all labour. Now this he refuteth by ſhewing the meanes whereby righteous men vſe to receiue this food and prouiſion from Gods hand, and that is by ſedulitie and diligence in their vocations. And therefore he demonſtrateth the contrarie effects of contrary men; namely, of ſlothfull perſons, and ſuch as bee induſtrious and paineſull. Slothfull perſons fall into two euils: the one is the practiſe of deceitfulnes, called here a deceitfull hand: the other is the burthen of pouertie, which is a puniſhment inflicted vpon them both for fraud & idleneſſe. They that be diligent haue their reward yeelded vnto them, that they thriue and proſper by the labour of their hands: and though their wealth be not ſo great in quantitie, yet the ſmalneſſe thereof is recompenſed in qualitie and good vſe of it; and therefore is called, *precious riches*, Chap. 12.27. And ſo they haue neither neede nor diſpoſition to giue themſelues to deceitfull ſhifts, as ſluggards.

A deceitfull hand, &c.] Falſe dealing is no profitable trade to gaine by, it rather hurteth then helpeth them that vſe it. Tending to this purpoſe are manie Parables in this booke: as Chap. 13.11. *The riches of vanitie ſhall bee diminiſhed*: they may bee gotten, but not long kept, and though they periſh not, nor bee taken away all at once, yet they will conſume and bee waſted by degrees. And as this euent is heere declared to come vpon euill gotten goods; ſo in an other place hee telleth the miſerie that ſhall ouertake the men themſelues that ſo fiſh for them: Chap. 19.15. *A deceitfull perſon ſhall bee affamiſhed*. As wealth will forſake them, ſo friends will faile them, and God will curſe them, and pouertie will oppreſſe them. *Doct.* Guiles bring no gaine.

Firſt,

Reasons 1. First, the Lord doth hate and curse both deceit and deceiuers, as being abomination vnto him: and therefore his displeasure will kindle a fire in their estate to consume them.

2 Secondly, consider from whence verie often this deceitfulnesse proceedeth: from idlenesse and remisnesse of men in their callings; as manie texts doe testifie, and the *Antithesis* especially and opposition in the two places before alleadged. Now if single sloathfulnes of it selfe will so eate vp a mans estate, as heereafter is to be shewed; much more when it hath such a companion to take part with it. And for experience hereof, looke vpon gamesters, and couseners, and shifters, and all such kind of people, and see whether their owne negligence and vniust courses, doe not like hungry and greedy beasts, deuour and swallow vp all their portions.

3 Thirdly, it is a righteous thing with God, so to requite them with penurie, that by fraud and falshood seeke to bring other men to it.

Vse 1. Instruction. If we be visited with beggery or needinesse, (the burthen of pouertie pressing vs so heauily that wee cannot well beare it) let vs examine our owne courses, and call our waies to account, to see whether our owne fraud and guile haue not brought such a guest to our houses: and so doing, we shal turne the poison into a medicine, & that which is to others a iudgement, may bee to vs a singular mercie to draw vs to repentance, from such vnrighteous behauiour.

2 Secondly, we be yet spared from the stroak of God, that hee hath not arrested our substance, being forfaited by falshood, nor depriued vs of the same. Let vs then speedily preuent the punishment by breaking off the sinne by repentance, by mercy, by reformation and restitution to the right owners, so far as possibly we shall be able.

3 Reproofe of their folly which hope to inrich themselues by deceit and wrongfull dealing, trusting to rise by that which bringeth others to a fall, and to turne that to a gaine, which is to others a losse. But by triall they shall bee taught, that they may as well looke to thriue by vnthriftinesse, as to increase their stocke by deceite, or profit themselues by rapine, and wrong

wrong doing.

Obiect. But it appeareth, that their ſucceſſe is correſpondent to their expectation, the euent proueth that they make a gaine of it. The Prophet teſtifieth, that, *As a cage is full of birds, ſo their houſes are full of deceit, and thereby they are become great, and waxed rich.* Ierem.5.27.

Anſwere. They may get things into their hands, and yet be preuented of the fruition of them. They may haue them for a time, and loſe them at the laſt, as the ſame Prophet alſo teacheth: *As the Partridge gathereth,* or *laieth egges, and hatcheth not: ſo he that getteth riches, and not by right, ſhall leaue them in the middeſt of his daies, and in the end die like a foole.* Ierem.17.11. They haue not a broode of comforts, ſo ſoone as they ſit vpon their neſt of riches, they may be troden vpon, or addle, or eaten vp. Euill may befall them before they can doe them any good; or if their goods remaine, themſelues may ſoone be remooued from their goods: and in the meane time haue the curſe of God on ſoule and bodie, which is much more grieuous, then to be ſmitten in outward eſtate.

But the hand of the diligent, &c.] They greatly help their own eſtate that are painefull and faithfull in their vocations. Among many teſtimonies whereby this point is confirmed, that is to be noted which is in the thirteenth Chapter of this booke; *The ſoule of the diligent ſhall haue plentie,* or *be made fat,* as the word ſignifieth. Where though by ſoule he vnderſtandeth the whole man, yet that part is not named in vaine. Their bodie and outward man ſhall haue enough, and the ſoule and inward man ſhall bee content and ſatisfied with enough, and much refreſhed by it. *Doct.* A man faithfull in his calling betters his eſtate. Prou.13.4.

Firſt, it is appointed to man by the decree of God, not onely as a dutie to trauell and labour, but alſo as a portion *to eate his bread* thereby, and enioy the fruit of his labour, Gen.3.19. Pſalm.128.2. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, diligence and painefulneſſe is a ſeruice to God, and they that here haue the promiſe made to them, are ſuch as performe their works in conſcience, and obedience to his will, and therefore may well be aſſured of allowance to maintaine 2

them. As for ſuch as worke for the worlds ſake, in pride, and couetouſneſſe, or vpon coaction and neceſſitie, or for any other ſiniſter reſpect, they may bee ſaid to bee great doers that meddle in much dealing, but nothing diligent: and therefore it is no meruaile, though all their toile and trauell doe ſeldome take any good effect.

3 Thirdly, their paines and labours are for the common good, they ſerue for the vſe and profit of mankind, (for they that ſpinne the ſpiders web, and are more buſie then well occupied, are not to bee counted in the number of theſe) and therefore ſhall not faile of the benefit of it themſelues.

4 Fourthly, faithfull imployment, and paines taking is a medicine againſt pride, and helpeth to worke humilitie, and therfore maketh readie the way for all good proſperitie.

5 Fifthly, by this meanes they are kept from vicious companions, and ſinfull exerciſes, and all kind of ſuch vnthriftie courſes, as whereby the ſtates of manie men come to vtter ruine and ouerthrow.

Vſe. Inſtruction to all degrees from the higheſt that ſitteth on the throne, vnto the loweſt that clenſeth the chanels, or grindeth at the mil, that euery one attend with heedefulneſſe to the duties of his calling without remiſneſſe or negligence. Art thou great, and ſubſtantiall, as we vſe to ſay? take this way to increaſe thy greatneſſe, and inlarge thy ſubſtance; and as the multitude of riches and titles doe not diminiſh thy liking and eſtimation of them, ſo let it not abate thy induſtrie and diligence in anie ſeemely ſeruices. And thou which art poore, and of inferiour place, let it not repent thee to trauaile in works that others peraduenture would diſdaine to exerciſe, but proceede in hope, and know for thy comfort, *that in all labour there is abundance*, Chap.14.23. And albeit now thou art at the commandement of others, and according to their willes art wholly vſed in their workes, yet remember that *the hand of the diligent ſhall beare rule*, Chap.12.14. From a ſeruant thou maieſt grow to bee a maſter, from a labourer or hireling, thou maieſt attaine to bee an officer, and haue others at thy commandement. But whatſoeuer thy ſtate prooue to bee amongſt men,

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aſſure thy ſelfe of the reward of inheritance from God, *for thou ſerueſt the Lord Chriſt:* Col.3.24.

Verſ.5. *Hee that gathereth in ſummer is a ſonne of vnderſtanding: and he that ſleepeth in harueſt is a ſonne of confuſion.*

THe drift of theſe words is to teach men to redeeme the time, and make the beſt aduantage of the ſeaſons, comparing opportunitie to ſummer or harueſt, when the fruits of the earth are ripe, and readie to be gathered; and the perſons to whom it is offered, to husbandmen that haue commodities growing in the fields. And therefore as we iudge him prudent which ſo ſtirreth himſelf, and haſteneth his people to cut down his corne, and to inne it when it is ripe, and the weather is ſeaſonable: ſo God here calleth him a ſonne of vnderſtanding, that is, a wiſe man, which taketh time while time ſerueth, for any good purpoſe and occaſion. And as the world crieth, fie on him that ſleepeth in harueſt, that is, doth no more labour or looke to his affaires, then if hee were in a dead ſleepe, and ſo ſuſtaineth the loſſe of all his croppe, by meanes whereof hee ouerthroweth the ſtate of all his familie: ſo the Lord termeth him a ſonne of confuſion, or which bringeth confuſion, that is to ſay, miſerie and ſhame vpon himſelfe and his friends, which ſtriueth not to take his part of Gods bleſſing in due ſeaſon.

It is a matter of great importance to make our vſe of a good opportunitie when it is offered. The example of the *Ant* is to that end propoſed, Chap.6.6. that wee might learne of the vnreaſonable creatures, and thoſe which are alſo of no account and reckoning. They are led onely by ſenſe, and inſtinct of nature; wee haue reaſon that may perſwade to it; they haue none to giue them admonition, or to call vpon them: we haue guides to direct vs, and the word of God ſeriouſlie inſtructing vs in the dutie. And that is there commended in them, which incomparablie will be more effectuall in Chriſtians: namelie, that wiſedome ſupplieth the defect of ſtrength, and prouidence effecteth that which other things cannot bring to paſſe by their power.

Doct. Opportunitie not to be omitted.

Examples hereof we haue in *Ioseph*, who in the time of great plentie, prouided against the yeeres of scarcitie: and in the Church of Antiochia, who being foretold of the famine to come, made prouision before hand for the Saints of Ierusalem.

Reason 1. First, it is a thing pleasing to God, to accept of his gifts when his gratious hand doth reach them out vnto vs: and verie offensiue to him when wee put by the fauour and kindnesse that he maketh offer of. For hee taketh it, either as a contempt of the things which he would bestow: or as a controlment of his wisedome; as though hee did not see farre enough into the fitnesse of euerie season.

2 Secondly the euents that fall out on both sides doe make this manifest: they that open their hands to receiue, when God openeth his to giue, they that are prepared to accept with thankefulnesse, as he is readie to bestow in mercie, such shall haue the blessings of God confirmed vnto them with new blessings: and to them will bee communicate much and often, and that which is excellent, which giue speedie entertainment to his graces. But on the other side, when men hold him off with delaies, and grow nice and coye, and turne his benefits backe vpon him, they shall be soone rid of them, and stript of all his mercies: they shall call and crie at another time, and haue no answere, they shall search and seeke, and finde no successe, they shall feele their wants, and faile of supplie to relieue them.

Vse 1. Reproofe of them that bee euill husbands for themselues, in the things of this present life, pretermitting the precious time of getting skill in anie profitable trade or science, and onelie learne the art of vanitie, and bee manie yeeres apprentices to dogs, and dice, and hawkes, and boules, and to euerie ruffianly companion, that shall teach them to swagger, and sweare, to swill, and quaffe, and play all the parts of professed Atheists. And so at last (their wits being worne out for want of wisedome, which would haue preserued them, their strength consumed in striuing to doe mischiefe, and age perishing in them as neuer yeelding fruit to themselues, or anie others) they come to

to that condition as did the vagabonds that *Iob* ſpeaketh of. that euerie man will be readie to preferre his dogs before them (as in equitie it is fit for the maſter to take the better hand of the ſeruant) and to let his verie dunghill haue preeminence aboue them. Their wretched and curſed courſes in miſſpending their time doe worke them the fulneſſe of woe and miſerie, and make them odious and hatefull to God and godly men, and to ciuill men, and burthenous and loathſome to vngodly and ſinfull men, Secondly, of them that bevnthriftie for their ſoules, 2
which neuer applie themſelues to prepare for another life, before they be departing out of this. They doe not once thinke of ſeeking heauen and euerlaſting ſaluation, vntill they bee ſinking into hell and perpetuall perdition. They imagine that earthly things will require long labour to compaſſe them, but pietie, and grace, repentance, and faith, may be gotten in a moment: they be readie at their will, and their will will be flexible to their wiſh, and neither abilitie, nor will, nor wiſh will be wanting at the time of their deaths. Oh miſerable men, how long will their eies be blinded! How long will their hearts be hardned! Doe they not perceiue that ſinne and Satan haue power ouer their affections and deſires, and purpoſes, and will, and all the faculties of their whole ſoules? Euen this maketh it cleare that it is ſo, becauſe they doe not perceiue it to bee ſo. And if their ſoules bee in ſuch bondage and ſubiection, and held at the wil of the diuel, that now in their freſh age & health (their ſenſes being more capable of inſtruction, and the miniſterie of the word readie to yeeld inſtruction) they cannot attaine to ſound and godly ſorrow, and conuerſion: let them not deceiue themſelues, as though in ſickneſſe, and paine, and dotage, and ſenſeleſneſſe, and affected blindnes of minde, they can by their owne diſpoſition returne ſincerely to the Lord.

Verſ.6. *Bleſſings are vpon the head of the righteous: but iniquity ſhall couer the mouth of the wicked.*

BLeſſings.] That is, all kind of happineſſe, euerie good gift of God that is fit for them, as peace, plenty, grace, & health,

&c. All ſhall be vpon the head of the righteous: meaning vpon the whole ſoule and body of euery faithful holy man. And they are ſaid to be on the head, becauſe they come downe from aboue, and light as it were vpon the head, and ſo deſcend to the other parts. But iniquitie, the vengeance of God executed for violence and ſinne, ſhall couer the mouth of the wicked, ſhall take away all excuſes & defences from him. Now here is ſomewhat vnderſtood in the former clauſe, and expreſſed in the latter: and ſomewhat vnderſtood in the lattet, and ſupplied in the former. Bleſſings are vpon the head of the righteous, and therefore doe open his mouth, *viz.* to praiſe God, and maintaine his owne innocency, and iudgements (called here violence or iniquity, by a *metonymie* of the cauſe) they are vpon the head of the wicked, and ſo cloſe vp their mouth.

Doct. 1. Bleſſednesse is the greatest gift of God to his seruants.

Bleſſings, &c.] The greateſt reward that God doth giue to his ſeruants in this life, is to bleſſe them. That is very ordinary with the Prophets in the Pſalmes, and other places of Scripture, in wiſhing well to the Church, to pray for this, and in gratulations to commend it, and in thankfulneſſe to God to acknowledge it. As in the fift Pſalme, verſe 12. deſiring the comfort and ioy of faithfull men, and praying the Lord to worke it in them, he ſheweth what iuſt cauſe they had to be ſo affected: *For thou Lord* (ſaith he) *wilt bleſſe the righteous, and with fauour wilt compaſſe him as with a ſhield.*

Reaſon 1. Firſt, ſuch bleſſings as are here ſpoken of, be ſure teſtimonies of Gods loue, and proceede meerely from his gracious goodneſſe: they are infallible pledges of his fauour; as it appeareth in the words of the Pſalme laſt quoted.

2 Secondly, they be prerogatiues peculiarly appropriated to godly men: for ſaith he in an other place; *Salvation belongeth to the Lord, and thy bleſſing is vpon thy people.* It is alwaies accompanied with ſaluation: none are bleſſed but ſuch as are ſaued; and none are either bleſſed or ſaued, but ſuch as are the people of God.

3 Thirdly, they haue all good things infolded in them, which readilie according to our neede are miniſtred vnto vs: Deut. 28.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Gods bleſſings doe ſeaſon all proſperitie and the gifts that it bringeth, and maketh them comfortable; and al aduerſity, and maketh it profitable: wheras the curſe doth poiſon both to the wicked. 4

Inſtruction. That whereas we deſire to haue the Lord powre this heauenly gift vpon vs; ſo let vs obſerue the conditions that he doth preſcribe to them which ſhall receiue it. Let vs get holineſſe into our hearts, and bleſſings cannot chuſe but bee vpon our heads: let righteouſneſſe haue place in our actions and behauiour, and peace will haue force in our ſoules and bodies. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation to all true hearted Chriſtians, that haue this bleſſed gift of Gods bleſſing. He that may truely be ſaid to poſſeſſe the bleſſing, cannot poſſiblie ſay how much he doth poſſeſſe: The varietie of this treaſure is vnſpeakable; his ſubſtance exceedeth all eſtimation; his inheritance is endleſſe, and without all bounds and limits. Though we ſhould be as much moleſted with malitious men as *Dauid* and *Paul* were, and as much aſſaulted by Satan and tried by Gods owne hand, with loſſes or bodily infirmities, as *Iob* was; yet if we be bleſſed of God as they were, what cauſe can there be of feare, or griefe, or diſcontentment? The bleſſing bringeth ſtrength for ſupportance in them; the bleſſing bringeth iſſue and deliuerance out of them; the bleſſing worketh the right vſe of them; the bleſſing yeeldeth a plentifull reward of comfort, and good proſperitie in this life, and of glorie and euerlaſting happineſſe in the life to come. 2

When God entreth into iudgement with wicked men, hee will cauſe the plague ſo to manifeſt their ſinnes, that they ſhall not bee able to denie them. Though hypocrites can make the greateſt ſhew, and vſuallie bee moſt forward to ſpeake for themſelues; yet when God found out the diſſembler in the Goſpell, and called him to a reckoning for intruding himſelfe to his feaſt without a wedding garment, he was ſtricken dumbe and ſpeechleſſe, he could plead nothing for himſelfe. *Haman* ſtanding onely before the miniſter of Gods vengeance, hauing been before that time his greateſt friend, yet when *Heſter* accuſed *Doct.* 2. Wicked mens ſin ſhall bring them to ſhame. Mat. 22. 12. Heſt. 7. 6.

cuſed him of his falſe and cruell practiſes, hee ſtood mute and could not reply. He that attempted to ſtop the mouth of *Mordecai*, had his own mouth ſtopped with his violence. And therfore when God himſelfe commeth to indite men, and to *ſet their ſinnes in order before them, all mouthes ſhall be ſtopped* and *all the world ſhall be culpable before him*. No ſinfull and vnregenerate perſon, which hath no right to plead Chriſts merits, can poſſibly ſpeake anie thing to iuſtifie himſelfe.

Pſal.50.21. Rom.3.19.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, that the Lord may haue his words verified to bee all true and righteous, and his dealings alſo iuſt and holy: Pſalm. 51 4. And for this cauſe, howſoeuer ſinfull men haue their mouthes ſhut vp at his iudgements, that they can ſay nothing for themſelues; yet he doth ſometimes open their mouthes, to draw out a confeſſion againſt themſelues; as in the caſe of *Iudas*, and *Pharao*, and *Adonibezek*. Matth. 27.4. Exod.9.27. Iudg.1.7.

2 Secondly, in regard of the elect ſinners, that ſeeing the ſinne and puniſhment mixed together, and themſelues guiltie of the one, and worthy of the other, they may bee humbled and driuen to repentance. So were *Ioſephs* brethren frighted and brought to make this confeſſion; *What ſhall we ſpeake? and how ſhall we iuſtifie our ſelues? God hath found out the wickedneſſe of thy ſeruants*: Gen.44 16.

3 Thirdly, it maketh the torments of the reprobate to bee exceeding fearefull and terrible.

4 Fourthly, it is for admonition to others to take heed by their examples. This hath *Zachary*, chap.1.4.5.6.&c. *Be not like your fathers, that would not heare the former Prophets. Where are your fathers? Did not my words take hold of them? and they returned, and ſaid; As the Lord hath determined to doe vnto vs, according to our owne waies and works, ſo hath he done.*

5 Fifthly, for the ioy and comfort of Gods people, ſeeing the Lord vndertaking their cauſe, and executing his wrath vpon their enemies.

Vſe 1. Admonition, not to venture to commit ſuch ſinnes as wee can cloake and colour by denials, defences, excuſes, or extenuations: or if wee haue that way faulted already, let vs ſpeede

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our confeſſion, leſt the Lord haſten his plagues to compell vs vnto it: or if wee will not be brought to acknowledge them our ſelues, the iudgements and curſes which hee will ſend forth, ſhall openly publiſh and declare them. And therefore it is good to iudge our ſelues, that he may ſpare vs: to open our mouthes for a free confeſſion, and to ſhut them from leſſening of our offences. So did *Iob*, Chap. 39.37. *Behold, I am vile: what ſhall I anſwere thee? I will lay my hand vpon my mouth. Once haue I ſpoken, but I will anſwere no more: yea twice, but I will proceede no further.* And that grace doth God promiſe to his people by the Prophet *Ezechiel? I will eſtabliſh my couenant with thee, and thou ſhalt know that I am the Lord, that thou maieſt remember, and be aſhamed, and neuer open thy mouth any more: becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God.* Ezech.16.62, 63.

Verſ.7. *The memoriall of the iuſt ſhall be bleſſed: but the name of the wicked ſhall rotte.*

THis is one particular of the bleſſings mentioned in the former verſe, that that which is deareſt to a man, as his name, ſhall be in eſtimation, and good account. The remembrance and mention of him being abſent aliue, and when hee is dead, ſhall be acceptable, and with his praiſe & commendation: But the name of the wicked is curſed, and therefore had in hatred and deteſtation, euen as much loathed as the ſtinke of his carcaſe, that lieth rotting in the graue.

Doct. Good men grow in credit but ſinners glorie ends in ſhame.

The credit and honour of good men will grow to bee better, and the reputation of ſinners will bee turned into ſhame. Onely godly men haue good names, and it is one difference that God putteth betweene them and the wicked, that they bee bleſſed herein peculiarlie, and all others excluded from the benefit of it. Such a threatning doth *Iſaias* denounce againſt the wicked: *You ſhall leaue your name as a curſe to my choſen: for the Lord God ſhall ſlay you, and call his ſeruants by a new name.* Though ſinfull men bee magnified of ſinners, yet they ſhall bee made abominable to Saints, and that is the greateſt Iſai.65.15.

reproch: and though good men bee despised of the world, yet God will giue them glorie, and increase it, and vouchsafe them the titles, not onely of his seruants, but euen of his owne children.

Reason 1. First, they all, and none but they, are in credite with God and good men, and that onely is to be accounted true honour.

2 Secondly, the graces of sound hearted Christians will more and more appeare and shine out, and the secret sinnes of hypocrites, and other euill men will bee discouered, and brought to light, and both sorts shall haue estimation in time, according to their behauiour: which Saint *Paul* meaneth, when he saith, *That as some mens sinnes are open before hand, and goe before vnto iudgement: so some other mens follow after. Likewise also, that good workes are manifest before hand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid*, 1. Tim. 5. 24. 25.

3 Thirdlie, glory is an vnseparable companion of goodnesse: and so is shame of sinne: for God hath ioyned them together, and therefore hee that hath one of them cannot bee without the other.

Vse 1. Confutation of their error, that hope to become honourable and famous, and to leaue a name behind them, by fleshly courses: Some by getting much, and raising vp their houses, and performing great exploits. But the vnhappie successe of their vaine expectation is noted in the Psalmes, that *though they thinke their houses and habitations shal continue from generation to generation, and call the landes by their names, yet they shall not continue in honour, but perish* like beasts that die of the murraine. Who in all the world preuailed like to *Nebuchadnezzer*, in *Nebuchadnezzers* time? and yet howsoeuer he was applauded and admired at the first, hee was derided and exploded at the last, and made a prouerbe, and parable of reproch. Some by fine wit and policie, and dexteritie in speaking. But let *Achitophel* and *Herod* be examples to these, the one in counsell was wonderfull deepe, and his speeches were as oracles, and yet we repute him not to be a man of famous memory, but behold in him the verie image and figure of infamie. The other for his eloquent oration was deified of the people, and

Psalm. 49. 11. 12.

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with a concordant acclamation extolled for a god; but yet as God laid a preſent ſtroke vpon his bodie, and deliuered his life into the power of baſe vermine, to gnaw out his bowels, ſo hee laid a continuall curſe vpon his name, which will cleaue vnto it for euer. Some others by hypocriſie, and pretence of mercie and pitie: and yet without all conſcience or loue of either. But praiſe ſo purchaſed, is ſubiect to ſtaines and loſſe of colour. The Phariſies had obtained the opinion of goodneſſe, godlineſſe, righteouſneſſe, and of all vertue. They were almoſt of al men, thought to be the moſt holy men: and can there be now a greater indignitie offered to a man, then to call him a Phariſee? for that name carrieth in it the perfect paterne of pride, hypocriſie, and palpable diſſimulation.

Conſolation to righteous men that God vndertaketh the protection of their names: it is not in the power of anie creature to ſpoile them of their credit and reuerence: it is as ſurelie preſerued as their ſaluation: as their life is euerlaſting, ſo is the amiable remembrance of them. *The righteous*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt *ſhal be had in an euerlaſting remembrance*. The Prophets, & Apoſtles, and Chriſt himſelfe, and good men in their times were euill ſpoken of, and now haue a moſt bleſſed memoriall. And ſo of later yeeres, it was a great dignitie to bee a *Wolſey*, or a *Gardiner*, or others that were of great place, and cruell diſpoſition, but now wee reuerence the names of *Cranmer*, *Ridlie*, *Latimer*, *Hooper*, *Bradford*, and the meaneſt of them that ſuffered for the Goſpell of Chriſt, though they were then condemned for heretikes. The Apoſtle *Peter* encourageth vs to bee bold and cheerefull *though wee ſhould bee railed vpon for Chriſt his ſake: for the Spirit of God is a Spirit of glorie*, and that is giuen to vs *and reſteth vpon vs*, and who ſhall remoue it from vs? *Nabothes* name was in great hazard to bee blemiſhed, when hee was conuicted, and executed for treaſon, and blaſphemie, and no meanes left in appearance, to cleare his innocencie: yet God knowing it, hath made vs to know it, and the ſhort ſhame that hee bare for a time, is turned to a durable honour through all generations. 2 Pſalm.112.6. 1.Per.4.14

Vers. 8. *The wise in heart will receiue commandements: but the foolish in talke shall be beaten.*

THe wise in heart, &c.] That is, such as haue sauing knowledge, & conscience, *will receiue commandements*, will heare and obey the word of God without replies and cauils against it: *but the foolish in talke*, he that abuseth his lips to murmuring and friuolous obiections, *shall be beaten*, that is, shall be plagued for his contempt.

The sense will be plaine, if the supply be made in both clauses of the opposition, in this manner: the wise in heart will readily receiue commandements, and therefore shall be rewarded: but the foolish in heart will bee foolish in talke to reie& commandements, therefore he shall be punished.

Doct. Men must obey where God commands. Iames 1.19.

We ought to bee tractable to the will of God without resisting or gainsaying. To this dutie Saint *Iames* doth admonish vs, saying: *Let euery man be swift to heare, and slow to speake:* his meaning is not to perswade men to come suddainely, and rashly to the word without preparation: but to hearken desirouslie, with reuerence and attention when they are prepared, and not to picke quarels against that which is deliuered, vnaduisedly and out of a distempered affection, but vpon mature deliberation with a minde willing to bee resolued, to propose their doubts.

Reason 1. First, the Lord hath absolute authoritie ouer vs: and therefore he iustly may lay his commandements vpon vs.

2 Secondly, his whole will, and all his waies are perfectly righteous: and therefore to take exception against them must needs be vnrighteous.

3 Thirdly, they are altogether full of wisedome: and therefore none but fooles will presume to charge them with folly.

Vse 1. Instruction to cast off and remooue away the sinfull lusts of our harts, the fleshly discourse of carnal reason, and the resolute and setled purpose of any wicked way. For al these wil imbitter the soule, and whet the tongue to withstand and resist the holy commandements of God: Iam. 1.21. 1. Pet. 2.1. Ier. 44 16.17.

Reproofe

Reproofe of them that are willing to receiue the promiſes of God, but not the Commandements: or if they doe, it is in ſuch things as bee agreeable to their owne will, or at leaſt not contrary to it. So they dealt with *Ieremiah*, intreating him to declare vnto them all that the Lord ſhould ſay, and they would doe it; and they would haue bin as good as their word, if he had incouraged them to take their voiage into Egipt, whether they were bent to goe: but when he diſſwaded them from it by expreſſe prohibition & threatnings, they grew to another point; that it was not God which ſpake that, but *Ieremie*; and *Ieremie* did not ſpeake truely, but falſly; and it was not of himſelfe, but from *Baruch*, and *Baruch* had no good meaning in it, but to deliuer them into the hands of the Caldeans te be ſlaine, or carried away captiues: Ier. 43. 2. 3. 2

Conſolation for them that ſubmit themſelues to learne and obey the doctrine of Gods wil, though it many times do croſſe them in their affections & deſires, in their reaſon and conceits, in their pleaſures and delights, in their profits and commodities: this manifeſteth true wiſedome, this declareth a faithfull heart, this giueth a cleere teſtimony of ſincerity. The rich yong man attained not to this; nor *Herod* went ſo far: though he did many things by *Iohns* perſwaſion, yet he would not conforme himſelfe as to the wil of God, to doe euery thing, or to leaue euery thing according as hee required: Matth. 19. 22. Marke 6. 17. 18. 20. 3

Terrour for the braue gallants of our age which exerciſe their ripe heads and freſh wits in wreſtling with the trueth of God, and take it for a glorie to giue it a foyle. But howſoeuer their prompt wits, & ready tongues, together with art and Satans aſſiſtance, may ſometimes perplexe and trouble a poore Chriſtian, yet ſhall they nothing preuaile againſt Chriſt and his veritie, nor gaine anie thing at his hands, but ſhame and puniſhment. It were ſafer for them to incounter with tenne *Samſons*, then to trie their manhood with one point or article of Gods holy doctrine. But their caſe is worſt of all, which obſtinately, peruerſely, and of wilfull malice doe reiect all that is taught them out of the word. It is in vaine to admoniſh them, 4

as the Prophet ſaith, Hoſ.4.4. *Thy people are as they that rebuke the Prieſt:* that is, preſumptuous perſons, ſinning with an high hād, in refuſing to heare, or be directed by the Prieſt, thē of the law, Deut.17.12. or to giue eare to the Miniſters of the Goſpel now: but contentiouſly diſobey the truth, & ſo bring *vpon their own ſoules indignation & wrath, tribulation and anguiſh.* Rom.2.9

Verſ.9. *Hee that walketh vprightly, walketh boldly: but hee that peruerteth his waies ſhall be knowne.*

HE *that walketh vprightly.*] That is, doth carefully looke to his waies with an honeſt hart: *walketh ſurely;* hauing both the affection, and ground, and effects of Chriſtian boldneſſe: *but he that peruerteth his waies:* that is, doth allow himſelfe in any courſe, though neuer ſo ſecretly: *ſhall bee knowen;* his ſinnes ſhall be detected.

Doct. He liues ſafely, that liues ſincerely.

The ſenſe of the whole verſe may be thus expreſſed: *He that walketh vprightly, walketh ſurely;* becauſe his faithfulneſſe ſhall be knowne to his praiſe: *And he that peruerteth his waies, walketh dangerouſly;* becauſe his leaudneſſe ſhall be knowne to his ſhame.

All ſound ſafetie and boldneſſe proceedeth from ſinceritie of hart, and integritie of life. Euerie religious man that feareth the Lord, hath this promiſe, Pſal.112.7.8. *That no euill tidings ſhall make him afraid, becauſe he beleeueth in the Lord.* If all the world would tell him of perill, when God himſelfe doth warrant him ſafetie, he will giue moſt credit to him that hath moſt truth, and moſt power alſo to diſpoſe of all euents. And his heart is not as a pole that is pitched vp, or a ſtake that is ſticked vp, which euerie hand may plucke awry, or euerie blaſt of wind may blowe downe; nor like a dry wall without a quoine or buttreſſe, or any other binding to fortifie it: but it is fixed and eſtabliſhed as a tree that is well rooted, and groweth ſtrongly, or a building that hath a ſure foundation, and ſtandeth faſt, and ſo is freed from feare and all ſlauiſh terror.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, his heart hath Gods owne eye to behold it, and his Spirit to teſtifie the faithfulneſſe of it, and ſo receiueth comfort from

from him, as *Iob* did, when in the confidence of his cauſe and conſcience he ſaith: *O that I had ſome to heare me, behold my ſigne, that the Almightie will witneſſe for mee, though mine aduerſarie ſhould write a booke againſt me.* Whereas contrariwiſe, the hearts of hypocrites, being ſearched by him, are found moſt fraudulent and deceitfull. Iob.31.35.

Secondly the courſe of their actions is ſuch as will endure light, and the more they are examined, the better they will proue, and therefore they neede not feare any might or malice, or cunning aduerſaries that ſhall ſeeke their diſgrace. And vpon the aſſurance of this the Prophet profeſſeth his vndaunted courage and magnanimitie, with challenge alſo to his calumniant enemie whoſoeuer he were: *I haue ſet my face like a flint, and I know that I ſhal not be aſhamed. He is neere that iuſtifieth me, who will contend with me? let vs ſtand together: who is mine aduerſary? let him come neere to me.* And though their enemies for a time do falſly ſlander them, yet the Lord in due ſeaſon wil *make their righteouſneſſe as cleere as the noone day.* Pſal.37.6. 2 Iſa.50.7.8.

Thirdly, their bodies and ſtate are in Gods cuſtodie, and he hath vndertaken the defence and preſeruation of them; as hee promiſeth, Chap.3.26. *The Lord ſhall be for thine aſſurance, and ſhall preſerue thy foote from taking.* Whereas the wicked are out of Gods protection, and goe perpetually in perill. 3

Fourthly, their ſoules are prepared for death and the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt, and therefore more deſire to be diſſolued, then are afraid to heare of the neereneſſe of their diſſolution: which is contrary in the wicked, *who al their daies are in bondage to the feare of death and damnation:* Heb.2.15. 4

Inſtruction to get apparent and euident teſtimonies of vprightneſſe, which will make our liues comfortable, and keepe off manie miſerable vexations and horrors that come vpon the wicked. And this wee ſhall doe, if wee labour to know all that God would haue vs to learne, and to indeuor to practiſe al that we know, and confeſſe to God all that wee faile to practiſe: for ſo farre as we are willingly ignorant of anie duetie, or careleſſe to performe it, or ſecure when wee neglect it, and conceale our ſinnes, not acknowledging them that the Lord may remit them, *Vſe* 1. Pſal.32.2.3.

them, ſo farre wee come ſhort of a good conſcience.

2 Conſolation for al that be vpright, that whether they walke abroad, or ſtay at home; whether they bee in company with others, or alone by themſelues; whether it be in the day, or in the night; whether they be waking, or ſleeping; they are well aſſured of certaine ſafetie.

3 Terrour for ſinfull men, whoſe conſciences bee at all times readie to aſſaile them. Naturall courage will not helpe them in the time of extremity. How many ſeeming very valiant, as *Saul* for example, haue through deſperate feare, laid violent hands vpon their owne bodies? and let power and courage concurre together, yet both will be inſufficient to ſtrengthen a heart that Gods iudgement and their owne guiltineſſe doe weaken. As *Balthazzer* being bold to defie *Cyrus*, and to bidde battell to the Lord himſelfe, prophaning his holy veſſels in deſpight of him: yet now in the middeſt of iollitie, amongſt his friends in his owne houſe, in a ſtrange Citie guarded with an hoſt of armed ſouldiers, hee was ſo frighted and terrified, that his countenance was changed, his heart was reſolued into daſtardlineſſe, the ioynts of his loynes were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another. And what was it that ſo daunted him? the ſight of an hand writing vpon the wall. There were neither more enemies, nor fewer friends, nor anie other alteration then before: but God wakened his conſcience, and his conſcience ſhewed him his guiltineſſe, and all together threatned his deſtruction; and hereby his great courage was ſo quickly killed. And this alſo may ſerue to take away the vaine confidence of fooliſh men that be bold to commit iniquitie, and yet looke to eſcape the reproach of it: hoping neuer to be found out. But they forget that the Apoſtle ſaith, 1. Tim 5.24.25. that mens ſinnes come to light in diuers maners, ſome preſently vpon the fact, ſome long after, ſome in their life time, ſome after they be dead, ſome reſerued to the laſt day; but ſo, that all ſhall certainely bee manifeſted one day. *Caine* had as faire poſſibilitie and likelihood to couer his crueltie, as euer any ſinner had, or poſſibly can haue to conceale his offences, no man but himſelfe knowing of it, no circumſtances being to ſift it out by,

by, if hee would keepe his owne counſell; and yet what fact almoſt is more notoriouſlie knowne and publiſhed, and that with deteſtation, then his murdering of *Abel*? And it is not to be imputed to his owne ſillineſſe, or careleſneſſe of his name and credit, as though negligently hee had diſcouered it himſelfe; for he would haue hid it from the Lord, and conſequentlie from all men, if he could haue ſo carried the matter.

Verſ.10. *Hee that winketh with the eye worketh ſorrow: and hee that is fooliſh in talke, ſhall be beaten.*

THis confirmeth the latter clauſe of the former verſe, That they that peruert their waies ſhal be knowne, though they doe it neuer ſo ſecretly, which is meant by the winking of the eye. Yet by this it ſhall appeare that it is knowne, becauſe it ſhall bee puniſhed. For as they practiſe miſchiefe againſt others, and many times worke them ſorrow: ſo they certainelie bring miſchiefe on their owne heads, and procure ſorrow to their owne ſoules. And yet all winking is not condemned: but that which tendeth to hurt, when men winke wiles. The Apoſtle beekned or winked at *Iohn* that hee ſhould aske who it was that ſhould betray Chriſt, and yet this was well done of him; for he ſhewed a reuerend regard of Chriſt, that he would not bee loud and audacious in his preſence. If they peruert their waies openly by beeing fooliſh in ſpeech, open iudgement ſhall be executed vpon them for their open ſinnes, and thereby their mouthes ſhall be ſtopped. Ioh.13.24.

Doct. Sinne muſt haue no allowance.

It is not ſafe to vſe anie member of the bodie, or anie geſture though neuer ſo cloſely, to commit ſinne. The ſonnes of *Belial*, vnthriftie perſons are ſo deſcribed by their behauiour and threatned to bee puniſhed: Chap.6.12.13.14.15. *He walketh with a froward mouth, hee maketh a ſigne with his eyes, hee ſignifieth with his feete, hee inſtructeth with his fingers,* &c. *Therefore ſhall his deſtruction come ſpeedily: hee ſhall bee deſtroyed ſuddenly without recouerie.*

Reaſons 1. They are markes and meſſengers of a ſinfull heart within, as in the ſame Chapter, verſ.14. *Leand things are in his heart, he imagineth euill at all times.*

2 Secondly, great hurt is done by ſuch geſtures and ſpeeches and other like behauiour.

3 Thirdly, the members of our bodies, as eies, and tongue, and ſuch like, were created for the ſeruice of God, and are required to bee *weapons of righteouſneſſe* againſt ſinne, and not of ſinne, againſt God and his righteouſneſſe: Rom. 6. 19.

Vſe 1. To looke well to euerie one of them, that none of them bee in pay with Satan, or luſt, or malice, to fight the battailes of the fleſh, againſt the word and ſpirit of God. The Lord forbiddeth to *ſet a foote towards the breach of the Sabbath*: or *to ſmite with the fiſt of wickednesſe*, or *to lift vp a finger to crueltie or hard dealing*: Iſai. 58. 4. 9. 13.

2 Terror for them that haue the members of their bodies as armed rebels againſt the Lord, all following a ſinfull heart which is their captaine and leader.

3 Conſolation to the ſeruants of God, that the Lord beholdeth euery looke of the wicked aduerſaries, euery becke, euery nod, and all their plots and practiſes, and therefore euerie one ſhall be fruſtrate and defeated. And ſo the Lord heareth the boaſts and inſultations, the threatnings and ſlaunders, and all kind of hurtfull calumniations, that are breathed out againſt his people, hee will take their cauſe in hand, and thoſe virulent tongues that haue beaten others with falſe accuſations, and lies, ſhall be beaten themſelues with the rod of his vengeance; and the innocencie of the righteous ſhall bee cleared by the puniſhment inflicted vpon their enemies.

Verſ. 11. *The mouth of a righteous man is a welſpring of life: but iniquitie couereth the mouth of the wicked.*

IN Iſrael, and in the countries bordering vpon it, it was a great benefit to haue wels of water, both for the vſe of men and of the cattle, and therefore things of great account be manie times compared to them in the Scriptures, and here the mouth of a righteous man is ſo called in a double reſpect, both for the conſtancie of good conference (according to the ſimilitude, for ſuch ſprings as were continuall, and would hold out

as

as well in ſommer as in winter, were ſaid to bee wels of liuing water: Gen. 26.19. as alſo, and eſpecially for the good effect, that they be inſtruments ſometimes to beget, & vſually to confirme and refreſh the life of the ſoule. The latter part of the verſe hath been expounded in the ſixth verſe.

The expoſition ſtandeth thus: The mouth of a righteous man doth alwaies flow with wholeſome words; and therefore ſhall bee continued open with bleſſings: But the mouth of a wicked man doth alwaies flow with hurtfull words: and therefore ſhall be ſtopped with violence.

The mouth of the righteous, &c.] A good man is neuer barren of good ſpeeches. It is giuen as a precept by the Apoſtle to the Coloſſians, 4.6. that their ſpeech ſhould bee alwaies gracious, and poudred with ſalt, that is holy, and wholeſome for the matter, and diſcreete and ſeaſonable for the manner, which is not onely a commandement deliuered by God, as a thing that ought to bee: but a duetie in exerciſe and practiſe with all godly Chriſtians. *Doct.* Good men haue euer good words.

Firſt, the law of the Lord is in their heart, and therefore they cannot chooſe but talke and conferre of it: Pſalm. 37.30.31. *Reaſons* 1.

Secondly, their loue to God and the conſcience of their dutie conſtraineth them to praiſe him for his word and nature, and workes: and to make his glorie appeare vnto others. 2

Thirdly, they vſe it as a meanes to refreſh their owne hearts, and to procure helpe by prayer, and ſuch other exerciſes, for the ſupplie of all their wants of ſoule and bodie. 3

Fourthly, their loue to their brother, and deſire to haue men brought to euerlaſting life, doth ſtirre them to teach and exhort, to rebuke and admoniſh, to comfort and encourage, and euery way to helpe them to ſaluation. 4

Confutation of them who aſcribe the abilitie of conference and prayer wholly to men of wit and learning, that therefore they can ſay nothing becauſe their education hath not been in ſuch exerciſes, it belongeth to Preachers and Miniſters. But the holy Ghoſt doth impute it to righteouſneſſe heere, and to the efficacie and power of the ſpirit. Zach. 12.10. *I will powre vpon the houſe of Dauid, and on the inhabitants of Ieruſalem the* *Vſe.* 1

ſpirit of grace and prayer. Hee ſaith not they ſhall attaine vnto the art and method of prayer, which carnall men may get by carnall meanes, in the earth: but it is a bleſſing powred downe from aboue, as a gift from heauen, which onely his owne children haue decending vpon them, and all his people bee repleniſhed with it. It was not promiſed onely to the Prieſts, and Leuites, and Prophets, but to the houſe of *Dauid*, as in former times it had been on *Dauids* owne perſon: and to the inhabitants of Ieruſalem, as well as to the houſe of *Dauid*. Hee that ſaith expreſly that hee cannot pray, ſaith alſo by conſequence that he is not righteous, nor yet in caſe to bee ſaued. And hee that wanteth will and abilitie to talke Chriſtianlie, doth proclaime by ſilence, that hee hath not the ſpirit of faith. For the holy Ghoſt hath not loſt that vertue now, which he was wonted to worke in *Dauids* time, and in *Paules*, who thus teſtifie of themſelues, and of all other ſound hearted Chriſtians; *Becauſe we haue the ſame ſpirit of faith, according as it is written, I beleeued, and therfore haue I ſpoken, we alſo beleeue, and therefore ſpeake,* 2. Cor. 4. 13. More ſhall be ſpoken of this point in the 13. chapter, 14. verſe.

Verſ. 12. *Hatred ſtirreth vp contentions: but loue couereth all treſpaſſes.*

HAtred: and all vncharitable affections, as enuie and wrath, *ſtirreth vp ſtrife*: worketh all kinde of reuenge and miſchiefe, as backbiting, vpbraiding with former faults, and verie often procureth iniuſt criminations. *But loue couereth all treſpaſſes*: by forgiuing them and reproouing them in friendly manner, and by concealing them from all thoſe, to whom the knowledge of them hath not come, or doth not appertaine. the oppoſition is thus framed; Hatred ſtirreth vp contentions, and blazeth abroad mens infirmities, but loue ſeeketh peace, and couereth all treſpaſſes.

Doct. An ill heart raiſeth contention.

Hatred.] The actions and ſpeeches of men are not ſo much a cauſe of ſtrife and debate, as the euil affections of their hearts. Diuers times it falleth out that the wrong doer is not ſo much faultie

faultie as hee that ſhould better beare it: and no iniuries could worke a quarrelous contention, vnleſſe there were a defect of loue on both ſides. It is ſaid, Chap. 28.6. *That a fooles lippes come with ſtrife.* It is not the occaſion giuen, ſo much as the lips that make the breach: and the lips could not doe it, vnleſſe the man ſet them on worke; & the man would not ſo ſet them on work, vnleſſe folly and ſinne ouerruled both him and his lippes. So Chap. 15.18. angry men are brought in for the authors of ſtrife; but he that is ſlow to wrath, hath this teſtimony giuen him, that he will appeaſe it. What was the reaſon why *Ioſephs* brethren had ſuch a quarrell at him? Becauſe they ſaw their father loue him more then all the reſt, they hated him, and could not ſpeak peaceably to him: Gen. 37.4. What mooued *Ahab* to be alway ſo bitter againſt *Elijah* and *Michaiah*? He telleth the cauſe himſelfe; he hated them, and reputed them to be his enemies: 1. Kin. 21.20. and 22.8.

Firſt, whereſoeuer hatred is, and one man maligneth another, there is pride; and *onely by pride contentions come*: Chap. 13.10. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, if ſtrife did not more proceede from the inward corruptions, then the outward occaſions, they that were moſt wronged, ſhould neceſſarily be moſt contentious; and ſo *Moſes*, and *Dauid*, and *Ieremie*, and *Paul*, and Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe of all other, ſhould haue been moſt vnquiet and clamorous. But theſe had neuer any equall vnto them for peaceable and gentle behauiour: Numb. 12.2, 3. Matth. 12.19. 1. Pet. 4.23. 2

Confutation of them that lay the blame of their frowardneſſe vpon the vnkindneſſe of their neighbours: and eſpecially of ſuch as charge the miniſterie of the word, and the Preachers of it, with all the ſchiſmes and ſeditions, and with all the breaches and diuiſions that are in the Church. They publiſh the Goſpell of grace, which teacheth peace, and maketh peace betweene God and man, and betweene man and man, yea a man and his owne conſcience. But would there bee ſo great oppoſitions, ſay they, and themſelues and their doctrine ſo much croſſed and reſiſted, vnleſſe the cauſe were in them? They be troubleſome men, and buſie bodies, giuen to faction, *Vſe* 1.

and no man can liue in peace by them. The Diuell cannot liue in quiet by them, and therefore hee maketh a tempest in their hearts whom he possesseth; and so their waues dash against the
Mat.10.34. Ministers and al other good Christians. Our Sauiour knew that such would bee the successe of his Gospell; that wicked men would be in as great a hurly burly at it, as if hee had come with
Ier.11.20. fire and sword against them. *Ieremy* cleareth himselfe of all priuate occasions of discontentment amongst the people; hee neither borrowed on vsury, nor lent on vsury, nor had any trafficke or dealing with them: yet all contended against him, and euery man cursed him. But what moued them to such passion and distemper? the Diuell and their own sinfull hearts; which the prophet so mightily warred against.

2 Instruction. If our hearts rise against our brethren, and begin to grow turbulent and vnpeaceable, that then we call them to
Iames.4.1. examination: as St. *Iames* doth them that would examine themselues: from whence are these wars and contentions? are they not from lusts that fight in the members?

3 Not to trust enuious persons, (for they haue not the gouernment of themselues) though they speake faire, and offer reconciliation: yet if they cleanse not their soules of their inward rancour of malice, and that by repentance, they will breake out againe into bitternesse; as *Saul* did against *Dauid*.

Doct. *But loue couereth*, &c.] Christian loue doth cause men to bee
Loue is the least fault-finder. merciful to the soules and names of their brethren: which thing
1.Pet.4.8. Saint *Peter* teacheth, alleadging almost the very same words of this Scripture: *Aboue all things haue feruent loue amongst you: for loue couereth a multitude of sinnes.* It hideth them all, though there be neuer so many.

Reason 1. None haue this loue but such as haue felt Gods loue to themselues, remitting and couering their owne sinnes: and that maketh them merciful to others.

And by that argument the Colossians are perswaded to that duty, *that they should forbeare one another, & forgiue one another, if any man haue a quarrell to another: euen as Christ forgaue them, so should they doe.* Col.3.13.

2 Secondly, they esteeme their brethren as their owne flesh,

and

and members of the ſame bodie: and therefore will not willingly diſcouer the deformities, or sleers, or the naked or vncomely parts thereof.

Thirdly, they propoſe a copie or patterne to themſelues, how themſelues would bee dealt with in the like caſe; according to the rule of our Saviour, and the ſumme of the Law and Prophets. 3 Math 7 12.

Inſtruction to performe this dutie with faithfulneſſe and good diſcretion to our neighbours. Firſt, let vs take doubtfull things in the beſt part; for loue is not ſuſpicious, but hopeth well of things that may haue good conſtruction, and peruerteth them not to the worſt ſenſe. So wee deale with our children in their diſtempers, imputing them to ſome griping with wind, or breeding of teeth, or that ſome pinne pricketh them, it is meere neceſſitie that drieth vs to ſee their frowardneſſe. Secondly, though it be a fault, yet if it be a ſmall infirmitie, and eſpecially if it be a priuate wrong vnto our ſelues, let vs paſſe by it, as the Lord doth moſt gratiouſly with vs, whoſe children we muſt heerein declare our ſelues to be, in imitating of him: and it is a mans honour to paſſe by an offence. Thirdly, if there be an offence committed fit to bee reproued, let vs vſe all holy lenitie, if it may preuaile, or ſeueritie in compaſſion to draw them out of their ſinnes; for that is the beſt couering to bring them to repentance, that their iniquities may bee couered from Gods eyes, and waſhed away for euer. So did *Nathan* helpe to couer *Dauids* ſinnes, and was the beſt inſtrument of his clearing, by his free and faithfull diſcouerie of them. Fourthly, if it belong not to our place to giue them admonition, or they receiue it not at our hands; then let vs ſhew their diſeaſes to more skilful Phyſitions, and their wounds to better Surgeons, as *Ioſeph* told his father of his brethrens infamie: Gen. 37. 2. 1. Cor. 1. 11. and the houſe of *Cloe* ſhewed *Paul* of the diſſenſions of the Corinthians. *Vſe* 1. Eph. 5. 12. Prou. 20. 3. Iob. 23. 17. Iames. 5. 20. Gen. 37. 2. 1. Cor. 1. 11.

Reproofe of them that take it for their owne honour to bring others vnto diſgrace, they thinke that the blackeneſſe of their brethren will make them white. When they haue no goodneſſe in themſelues to helpe their credit, they goe about to dig

dig it out of the dunghill of their neighbours corruptions.

Conſolation to the ſeruants of God, that if the weake loue of creatures, that haue in them ſo great defect of loue and proneneſſe to hatred, bee of ſuch force as to hide their ſinnes, which be further from them; how much more ſhall the infinite loue of God couer all their ſinnes that are ſo neere vnto him? No man in his beſt loue to his beſt friend, can either forgiue ſinne, or worke repentance that ſinne may bee forgiuen: But God can performe both, and hath beſtowed vpon vs his Sonne; and his Sonne hath beſtowed vpon vs his life and blood to effect both.

Verſ. 13. *In the lips of him that hath vnderſtanding, wiſedome is found: but a rod ſhall be for the backe of him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding.*

THeſe words neede no further explanation, then the ſupply of that which is to be vnderſtood in both the clauſes. For this ſeemeth to bee the ſenſe of them: In the lips or ſpeech of him that hath vnderſtanding wiſedome is found, which keepeth iudgements and puniſhments from him: but in the lips of him that wanteth vnderſtāding folly is found; which bringeth iudgements and puniſhment vpon him. The firſt hemiſtich, or former part of the verſe, is the ſame ſimply ſet downe, and without allegory or metaphore, as was comparatiuely vttered in the eleuenth verſe, by the ſimilitude of a wel ſpring.

The latter part is the ſame in ſenſe that was in the eight and tenth verſes: for there it is ſaid; that *the foolish in talke ſhall be beaten.*

Verſ. 14. *Wiſe men lay vp knowledge: but the mouth of the foole is a preſent deſtruction.*

HEre is declared by what meanes wiſe men attaine to that abilitie and ſufficiencie of fruitfull ſpeeches, by due attention to that which is ſpoken to them, or which they read: or by diligent obſeruation of things which they behold. Thoſe they lay

lay vp, as a man would his treaſure, in a ſafe place. As therefore a prouident thriftie husband, which hath gathered together a ſtocke, will bee readie vpon ſhort warning to make a purchaſe, or vpon any good occaſion to disburſe a ſumme of monie: ſo hee that is faithfull in ſeeking knowledge, and applieth both heart and memorie to hold it faſt, and keepe it, ſhall readily in conuenient time draw out the good things which hee hath learned, either for his owne vſe, or the benefit and profit of others. Which is contrary in careleſſe and heedleſſe perſons: for they will bee as forward to ſpeake as anie others; but that which is within the heart, will quickly bee at hand to come out at the lips, and that is poiſon, and venome, and peſtilent matter, which will certainely hurt themſelues, and be dangerous to others. So then thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: wiſe men lay vp knowledge, and therfore their mouthes are a preſent preſeruation: but fooliſh men reiect knowledge; and therefore their mouthes are a preſent deſtruction.

Wiſe men, &c.] It is not enough to bring the eare to heare holie inſtructions, but the heart muſt alſo receiue and keepe them. The neceſſitie of this dutie appeareth by the ſerious exhortation which he giueth to that purpoſe in the beginning of the ſeuenth Chapter: *My Sonne keepe my words, and hide my commandements with thee: keepe my commandements, and thou ſhalt liue, and mine inſtructions as the apple of thine eyes.* Hee giueth this counſell as a friend, to a neere friend, as a father to his owne ſonne; for the matter of it is not of ſmall importance, but of the greateſt weight and moment, it behoueth men not onely to lay ſure hold of holy doctrines in regard of ſtate, but of their verie liues. And therefore not to looke to the ſafe keeping thereof as wee are charie of our monie, but to be as prouident that we be not ſpoyled of them, as we are watchfull to preſerue the members, yea the deareſt members of our bodies from violence. *Doct.* 1. What good the eare laieth in, that the heart muſt lay vp.

Firſt, the excellencie of wiſedome and ſauing knowledge may allure vs vnto it: for it is more precious and profitable then all earthly treaſures, which earthly minded men hoarde vp ſo carefully. *Reaſon* 1.

For the merchandize thereof is better then the merchandize of ſiluer, and the gaine thereof is better then gold. It is more pretious then pearles: and all things that thou canſt deſire, are not to be compared vnto her: Pro.3.14 15.

2 Secondly, it concerneth our ſaluation, and euerlaſting happines, faithfully to retaine the holy word of God in our ſoules.

And therefore it is ſaid to the Hebrewes, *How ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſaluation, which at the firſt began to be preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed to vs by them that heard him*: Heb.2.3.

3 Thirdly, the ſtore of grace that is congeſted doth miniſter matter, and opportunitie, and readineſſe of good and wholeſome ſpeeches to the lips.

For, that reaſon the Prophet yeeldeth; Pſal.49.3.4. *My mouth ſhall ſpeake of wiſedome, and the meditation of my heart is of knowledge, I will incline mine eare to a parable*, &c.

4 Fourthly, by this meanes: men are in their whole liues both framed to be good, and declared to bee good, and deliuered from all ſinfull courſes, that they may continue to bee good.

Pſalm.119.11. As hee profeſſeth in the Pſalme. *I haue hid thy promiſe in mine heart, that I might not ſinne againſt thee.*

According to that alſo in the ſecond chapter of this booke, Verſ.10.11. *When wiſedome entreth into thine heart, and knowledge delighteth thy ſoule, then ſhall counſell preſerue thee, and vnderſtanding ſhall keepe thee.*

And in this point the good ground, in the Goſpell, hath the preheminence aboue all the others, it receiueth the word, and giueth entertainement vnto it by attention, and ſo it goeth beyond the high way. Secondly, it hath a roote in it ſelfe, whereby it maketh a bold profeſſion in the time of perſecution, and ſo it goeth beyond the ſtonie ground. Thirdly, it keepeth a conſtant courſe of obedience, and bringeth the fruite of the ſeede to ripeneſſe, and ſo it goeth beyond the thornie ground.

Vſe 1. Reproofe of them, which, through the greedie deſires of corruptible and caſuall treaſures, are wholly withheld from ſeeking this one thing onely neceſſarie. A great crop of wheat

is

is offered vnto them, which they refuſe, and fill their barnes and garners with chaffe and ſtubble. They may loade themſelues, and fill their houſes with ſiluer and gold, with pearles and diamonds, and al kind of precious ſtones: and they take their backburthen, & peſter their houſes with old ruſtie yron, and droſſe, and pebbles, and other things that be heauie and cumberſome, but of no value. They haue libertie and opportunitie, they haue perſwaſion and incouragement to gather together, and ſtore vp abundance of durable riches, which can neuer periſh, nor be taken from them; and they take paines to heape vp ſnowe, and ſuch like matter, that will melt away and vaniſh in a moment.

Terrour to them that ſuffer Satan to rob them of all good leſſons and inſtructions, and yet thinke that no hurt at all is done to them. If their houſes had been broken vp by men, and their money taken out of their cheſts, their neighbours ſhould heare their clamours, and the whole Country ſhould heare their outcries; but let the diuell himſelfe bereaue them of that portion which ſhould not haue been onely for liuing, but life, not for this preſent ſtate, but their euerlaſting ſtate: in this caſe they be quiet, no wrong is offered to them, they haue ſuſtained no manner of loſſe. It is ſet downe as a iudgement and curſe by the Prophet, that men ſhall *put their monie into a broken bagge*: and what a fearefull caſe ſtand they in then that put the ſacred inſtructions of the bleſſed word of God into a bottomleſſe heart, that can hold nothing, but that which will peruert and hurt them? The Apoſtle giueth an earneſt caueat to the Hebrewes, admoniſhing them ſtrictly *to giue heed to the things which they heard, leſt they ſhould let them ſlippe*, and as the word ſignifieth, ſhould leake or runne out. For it were better to haue wounds in our bodies that all our blood ſhould guſh out, then to be rifted veſſels, hauing chinkes in our ſoules, that the doctrine of life ſhould ſoake away, and oaze out from vs. 2 Hag. 1.6. Heb. 2.1.

Conſolation to them that haue couetous deſires after ſpirituall diſhes, that would ſuffer nothing that waies to paſſe from them, but inlarge their affections vnſatiablie to gather 3

all. It is a point of follie, indeed, as it was in the rich man, *Luk.* 12. to multiplie worldlie wealth: but these haue the Lord to commend their wisedome, and it may as truely bee affirmed of them, as of such as be merciful, because they be the same persons, though the respects differ, That they lay vp in store, for themselues, a good foundation against the time to come, that they may obtaine eternall life.

Doct. 2. An ill mans mouth worketh much woe.

But the mouth of the wicked, &c.] The tongues of vngodly men are alwaies pernicious and hurtfull. Of them Saint *Iames* speaketh largely, comparing them to fire breaking out in an house, or whole towne, especially when it commeth by the hostilitie of the enemie, making assault to it; by meanes whereof men are staied from extinguishing of it, and haue not onely their goods, but their life also in great perill. And this flame of the tongue is so much more dangerous then materiall fire, *Iames.* 3. 5. 7. because *it is kindled of hell*, that is, the diuell himselfe hath set it on worke. And so in the same place hee resembleth them to *poison*, and that not of the common sort, but *to strong poison*, which is deadly, and faileth not to worke the bane of them that drinke it.

Reason 1. First, they are hurtfull, and bring great annoiance and mischiefe to other men, and therefore in the Scriptures are called *swords*, and *arrowes*, and *razors*, and *mortall weapons*. Ier. 9 8. Psalm. 52. 2. And yet such similitudes are not able fullie to expresse and set out the euill that commeth by venomous mouthes and virulent speeches. First, the tongue most commonly causeth weapons to bee drawne: all warres, all rebellions, all massacres, all quarrels, all manner of strifes are first breathed out of mens mouthes, on some part. Secondly, the hand may be held that handleth the weapon, the strokes may be warded, armour may preserue from the violence of them, or there may be refuge and couert to hide them that are pursued: but who can stay an vnruly tongue? What defence is against it? whether shall a man flie from a false accuser? what distance of place will preuent malicious calumniations? Thirdly, they which fall into the hands of most fierce and cruell enemies, which are pearced, and wounded with keenest and sharpest

ſharpeſt edge tooles haue all the hurt vpon their bodies; the extremitie of it reacheth but to take away their naturall life: but a ſlanderous tongue doth ſmite at the name, which an ingenious man would forgoe his breath to preſerue: and a peſtiferous ſeducing tongue doth peruert the ſoule, and by the poyſon thereof, are manie thouſands brought to euerlaſting perdition.

Secondly, they bring deſtruction vpon themſelues, and draw miſchiefe vpon their owne heads, as the Scripture teſtifieth: *The words of a wiſe man haue grace: but the lips of a foole deuoure himſelfe. The beginning of the words of his mouth is fooliſhneſſe: and the latter end of his mouth is wicked madneſſe.* The truth of this ſhall be ſpoken of more at large in the eighteenth chapter, and ſeuenth verſe; vpon theſe words; *A fooles mouth is his owne deſtruction, and his lips are a ſnare for his ſoule.* 2 Eccle.10.12.13

Inſtruction to be verie well aduiſed in all our ſpeeches, ſithence they are ſo important and weightie. Who would not heedefully foreſee where his arrow ſhall hit, before hee ſhoote it out of his bowe; leſt it ſhould deſtroy anie perſon or other creature through negligence? who would not be verie circumſpect and warie in diſcharging of a peece, leſt hee ſhould doe miſchiefe by it? And yet by theſe a man may affray, and not hurt; and hurt, and not kill; and kill, and not die himſelfe: but what arrow, what ſhot, what artillerie, what murdering peece is to bee compared to the mouth of a man that is not guided by a wiſe and watchfull foreſight? Great woe it worketh to other men; but it ſurely bringeth death it ſelfe vnto himſelfe: euerie word that breaketh an other mans skinne, doth certainely breake the kall of his owne heart; and hee that doth aime at another to giue him a wound, cannot miſſe himſelfe to violate his owne life. For ſo we learne in this booke: *Hee that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life: but he that openeth his lips, deſtruction ſhall be to him.* It concerneth therefore euery man to be as prouident, yea more carefull to looke to that which goeth out of his lips, then to that which commeth in; to be more afraid to vtter blaſphemous, reuiling, ſlanderous and infectious ſpeeches, in regard of the ſoule; then to eate and de- *Vſe* 1. Prou.13.3.

uour vnwholeſome meates in regard of the body. And by this we are admoniſhed to commit our mouthes to a better keeper then our owne wit or reaſon, or ciuill diſpoſition; leſt luſt and Satan doe oner-rule vs, to let in what they will, and to let out ſinfull words, when, and whether, and as oft as they will. And this moued the Prophet to pray to the Lord to ſet a watch before his mouth, and to keepe the doore of his lips.

Confutation of them that thinke it nothing dangerous to ſpeake whatſoeuer: words, they ſay, are but wind, when a man hath ſpoken, hee hath done, and ſo there is an end of that matter. Nay, when a ſinfull man hath ſpoken ſinfully, much hurt is done; and ſo there is but the beginning of a bad matter: for all the miſchiefe followeth after. So it may be ſaid of a cup of poyſon; it is but a draught, and when a man hath ſwallowed it, hee hath done with it; and ſo there is an end: but hath it done with him? will there bee no further working of it? it will continue his paine and torment vntill it haue made an end of his life.

Verſ. 15. *The rich mans goods are his ſtrong citie: and the feare of the needie is their pouertie.*

THe rich mans goods are his ſtrong citie, &c.] That is, wealthie worldlings doe truſt to their poſſeſſions when they haue great ſtore. For he ſpeaketh not of anie ſafety that they haue by their goods; but which they ſeeme to themſelues to haue; as is plainely expreſſed, Chap. 18. 11. They are as an high wall in his imagination: and it is ſometimes the fault of good men in their infirmities, to repoſe too much confidence in outward things, when they abound with them; as euen *Dauid* himſelfe acknowledged of himſelfe; *In my proſperitie I ſaid, I ſhall neuer be moued:* Pſal. 30. 6. On the other ſide, the want of earthly ſubſtance doth fill the hearts of vnregenerate poore men with feares of famine and miſerie. And Gods owne people are not alwaies free from the aſſaults thereof, by reaſon of the imperfection of their faith.

Doct. The extremitie of euerie ſtate is dangerous, and no condition

tion safe without grace. Of this had *Agur* a sensible apprehen- The meane
sion, when hee put vp that petition to the Lord, that *he would* estate is safest.
neither giue him pouertie nor riches, but foode conuenient for him: that is, a moderate estate, without excesse on either hand, Pro.30.8.

First, both of them bee curses from God vpon wicked per- *Reasons* 1.
sons. Of the one is testified, Psal.69.22. *Let their table be a snare before them, and their prosperitie their ruine.* Of the other, *Iob* giueth an example: *For pouertie and famine, they were solitarie, fleeing into the wildernesse, which is darke, desolate, and waste:* Iob.30.3.

Secondly, both of them draw their hearts from al good me- 2
ditations, thoughts, purposes, and desires, and fill them vp with fleshly cogitations.

Thirdly, both of them be occasions of vniust behauiour, pro- 3
curing them by indirect dealing to prouide for themselues: Psal.62.10. Prou.30.9.

Instruction to labour for the Spirit, which will protect vs *Vse* 1.
from the venome and hurtfull effects, as well of the one as the other. Doth the light of God shine on our habitations? hath hee filled our houses with good things, and giuen vs an ample portion of wealth and possessions? hath hee prepared and well furnished our table, and made our cuppe to runne ouer? Then will the holy Ghost prouoke vs; *when we haue eaten and filled our selues, to blesse the Lord our God for the good plentie which he hath giuen vs.* Deut.8.10. Hee will effectually admonish vs, that we be not hie minded, and trust in vncertaine riches; but in the liuing God, which giueth vs abundantlie all things to enioy; that wee doe good, and bee rich in good workes, and 1.Tim.6.17.18 readie to distribute and communicate, laying vp for our selues store against the time to come. Are wee in neede and necessities, abridged of that fulnesse which diuers others doe as it were swimme in? This holy Spirit will sustaine our hearts, and perswade vs of our heauenly Fathers all-sufficiencie of goodnesse, and abilitie of prouidence and prouision for vs. That will teach and inable vs, *in what soeuer state we are, therewith to be content; to be full and to be hungry; to abound and to haue want;*

to

to doe all things through the helpe of Christ which strengtheneth vs. Phil. 4. 12. 13.

Reproofe, first of them that too greedily labour to bee rich, hunting continually both day and night, and at all times, with heart and hand, and tongue, and all endeuour after these dangerous snares, desiring vehemently the curse of God vpon their own soules. Secondly, of them which by idlenesse, or any other vnthriftie courses, doe cast themselues into penurie and want. When the Lord doth lay pouertie vpon his seruants for a triall or exercise, he doth support them with sundry helpes; hee moueth men to be compassionate towards them; his owne prouidence doth succour them, when men, & strength, and forecast, and all other externall meanes doe faile them. And especially they haue hope, and patience, and all inward supportance, which maketh the defect of outward things easie vnto them. But when men will draw pouertie vpon themselues as a punishment, the mercies and commiserations of men are restrained from them, that none should extend mercie vnto them: Psal. 109. 12. And their hearts being ouercome, are more readie to pursue them with feare and griefe, and discontentment, then all their necessities.

Vers. 16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: but the reuenewes of the wicked to sinne.*

THe labour of the righteous tendeth to life, &c.] That is, the goods which good men vsually get by trauel (though many times they are descended to them by inheritance, or bestowed vpon them by gift, or by some other lawful meanes brought to their hands:) *tendeth to life*; viz. both of soule and bodie in this world, and for the world to come: whereas the riches of vngodly men are alwaies abused by them, and made the occasions and meanes of vnrighteousnesse. The opposition is this: the riches of the righteous doe tend to goodnesse, and so to their life: but the wealth of the wicked doth tend to sinne, and so to their death.

Doct. Riches are either profitable or hurtfull, according to the owners

owners,and vſage of them. The proſperitie of *Abraham,Iob* and other holy men is commended in the word of God, for the great good that they did, and receiued thereby: and the Prophets, and other holy writings doe as much condemne the opulencie,and wealth of the enemies of God; as making them to be moſt miſchieuous and miſerable. *Loe their wealth is not in their hand,* ſaith *Iob: therefore let the counſell of the wicked be farre from mee.* And Saint *Iames* willeth the rich men to weepe & howle, for the miſeries that ſhould come vpon them, Iam.5.1. Wealth is good,or bad, as it is vſed. Iob 21.16.

Firſt,the one ſort doe honour the Lord with their ſubſtance, beholding the hand of his prouidence, confeſſing the trueth of his promiſes, aſcribing the glorie to his name, and conſecrating themſelues, and their wealth to his will: the other make idols of their gold and ſiluer, and all their poſſeſſions: or elſe dedicate them to other idols, as pride, and luſt, and voluptuouſneſſe,&c. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, the one ſort giue bread to the hungry,and drinke to the thirſtie, and clothing to the naked, and are euery way readie to relieue the neceſſitie of their poore diſtreſſed brethren: the other abuſe their power and riches to tyrannie and crueltie,oppreſſing them that are alreadie in affliction, or contemning them that are their inferiours, or withholding the goods from the needie, whom God hath made the right *owners of them*:Pro.3.27. or elſe feeding gluttons and drunkards, and otherwiſe ſinfull and vnthriftie perſons. 2

Thirdlie, the one haue for themſelues the prayers of poore Chriſtians, whoſe bellies haue been filled, and their loines clothed and kept warme by them: the others haue the ſighes, and teares,and grones,and ſorrowes of them that be wronged, aſcending to heauen, and making a continuall crie in the eares of the Lord againſt them. 3

Fourthly, the one ſort receiue the bleſſings of God with thankſgiuing,and ſo they are not only wholeſome vnto them, but holy alſo,*being ſanctified by the word and prayer*,1.Tim.4.4 5 The other deuoure and ſwallow vp the good creatures, like brute beaſts,led altogether by ſenſualitie. 4

5 Fifthly, and laſtly, the one ſort haue laid vp a treaſure in heauen, and ſhall haue the full fruition of it, with greateſt glorie, at the appearance of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: and the other haue treaſured vp wrath againſt the day of wrath, when all their violence and crueltie ſhall be made manifeſt and puniſhed, and all their neglect of mercie and compaſſion ſhall bee publiſhed to their ſhame and confuſion, before the whole world.

Vſe. Inſtruction to euery man, that he doe not onely ſuruey his ſtate to ſee what he hath; but eſpecially to know what hee is: let him not ſo much regard the value and quantity of his poſſeſſions, as the faithfull and fruitfull imployment of them. If the happineſſe of *Iob* had conſiſted in hauing much, hee could not but haue felt much miſerie, when ſo much wealth was conſumed to nothing: but now hee could recount with comfort, how wealthie and mightie he had formerly been, becauſe hee could truelie relate alſo, how righteous, and mercifull he had been.

Verſ. 17. *He that regardeth inſtruction is in the way of life: but he that refuſeth correction goeth out of the way.*

HE *that regardeth inſtruction.* That is, which yeeldeth reuerence, attention, and obedience to the miniſtrie of Gods holy word; *is in the way of life,* hee taketh the right courſe to obtaine euerlaſting ſaluation: *but hee that refuſeth correction,* which will not indure to heare his ſinnes rebuked; *goeth out of the way,* both depriueth himſelfe of eternall life, and walketh towards deſtruction.

The doctrine of this is fit to be handled in the firſt Chapter, where it is more largely ſet downe by the holy Ghoſt.

Verſ. 18. *He that hideth hatred, is a man of deceitfull lippes; and he that vttereth ſlander is a foole.*

HAuing in the former words declared the perill of them that refuſe admonition, hee deſcribeth here the perſons that

that vſe to doe it, and they are of two ſorts: ſome are hypocrits, that pretend and make a ſhew of fauour and good liking, and yet nouriſh deadly hatred in their hearts: others are profeſſed contemners of that which is taught: but yet picking a quarrell againſt the man that deliuereth it, as though the fault were wholly in him, and iuſt occaſion were giuen to reiect all that he teacheth. But the Lord, which knoweth the ground and roote of their calumniations and cauils, imputeth them to their proper cauſe: and that is, the ſinfulneſſe and folly of thoſe malicious deſpiſers.

The Lord hath hypocriticall diſſemblers in deteſtation. The Prophet *Danid* maketh mention of ſuch: Pſalm. 28. 3. 4. *Draw me not away with the workers of iniquitie, which ſpeake friendlie to their neighbours, when malice is in their hearts. Reward them according to their deedes, and according to the wickednesse of their inuentions.* His earneſt prayer to God is to eſcape their hands; for they were verie ſubtill, and readie to take him; and verie cruell and violent, if he ſhould come into their clouches. Their trade and occupation was to worke iniquitie, and therefore alſo their wages and hire ſhall bee deſtruction. By all which circumſtances it manifeſtly appeareth, that there is enmitie betweene God and them. *Doct.* 1. A plaine hart pleaſeth God.

Firſt, they are exceeding dangerous, becauſe they treacherouſlie intrap them that truſt them. They know their counſels and purpoſes, and haue all meanes of aduantage againſt them; whereas they would take heede of a profeſſed aduerſary, and keepe them out of his company, and hide themſelues from him. And that made *Danid* to crie out vpon the execrable fact of *Achitophel* in conſpiring againſt him, Pſalm. 55. 12. 13. *Surelie mine enemie did not defame me: for I could haue borne it: neither did mine aduerſarie exalt himſelfe againſt me: for I would haue hid me from him. But it was thou, O man, euen my companion, my guide, and my familiar.* And ſo doth he find himſelfe much grieued with them that had *ſmooth tongues, as ſoft as oyle, and butter; and yet were as ſharpe and hurtfull as any ſwords.* *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, the iudgements of God will declare his hatred againſt ſuch perfidious *Iudaſes*, not onely in executing other 2

punishments vpon them, but euen in bringing to light the falshood and hidden malice of their wretched hearts. As it is said, that *hatred may be couered by deceit: but the malice thereof shall be discouered in the cõgregation*. Prou. 26 26. Though *Saul* made a faire shew to *David*, cloking his secret mischieuous purpose to haue him killed, by giuing his daughter to be his wife: yet now it is notified and made knowne to all nations and posterities.

1.Sam.18.17.

Vse.

Instruction, first, to auoid this cursed sinne, that bringeth the curse of God vpon the sinners. Let vs learne to bee plaine hearted towards our brethren; and if ought be amisse in them, let our lippes faithfully admonish them in loue, and not flatter them in hatred. It may bee a courtly tricke to dissemble, but not an honest part to practise it; it may bee agreeable to carnall policie, but it is altogether contrarie to Christian wisedome. Secondly, to bee warie how wee conuerse with such cunning dissemblers; and if wee cannot auoide their companie, yet suffer not your selues to be deceiued by them. It is not want of Charitie, not to giue credit vnto them, but an holy discretion; which the holy Ghost himselfe perswadeth vs to: *Hee that hateth will counterfeit with his lippes: but in heart he laieth vp deceit. Though he speake fauourablie, beleeue him not: for there are seauen abominations in his heart*: Prouerbs 26. 24.25.

Doct. 2. Railers are fooles.

And he that vttereth slander, &c.] It is a note of a sinful foole, to haue a bitter railing and slanderous tongue. Our Saviour reckoneth this amongst many other foule sinnes, proceeding from a corrupt heart, whereby wicked men are defiled: *Out of the heart*, saith he, *come euill thoughts, murthers, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, and slaunders*: Matth.15 19.

Reason 1.

First, they grieuously wrong the partie whose name they traduce: for if a *mans estimation be of greater value then gold or siluer*: Prou. 22. 1. then a greater iniurie is offered by them which depraue him in that, then by those that shall robbe him of his goods and spoile him in his estate. Nay, many times the violence that is offered to ones person, is lesse hurtfull then to bee reproched in his name; and therefore they that shew that

that indignitie, are compared to *hammers*, and *ſwords*, and *ſharp arrowes*: Prou.15.28.

Secondly, they take the way to poyſon the hearts of all that ſhall heare their obloquy, to alienate them from all good inſtructions, when they ſhall raiſe vp rumors, and falſe reports of ſcandalous behauiour againſt the Miniſters of the word; & by this meanes they worke a publike miſchiefe; To keepe many from euerlaſting ſaluation. 2

Thirdly, they are moſt iniurious to their owne ſoules, excluding themſelues from the priuiledge of Gods people in this life, and the bleſſed ſtate of glory in the life to come. Pſal.15.3. 3

Inſtruction. If wee deſire the credit of wiſedome, let vs vſe better meanes to obtaine it, then obtrectations and artificiall diſgracings of our brethren; for that commeth not from aboue; it is no gift of God; it is ſenſuall, carnal, and diuelliſh. Secondly, not to hearken to the reports of ſuch wicked perſons that ſeeke to defame others, and detract from their good name: they are but fooliſh and baſe pedlers that vtter ſuch infectious wares: and therefore they cannot be wiſe chapmen that traffieke with them, and receiue them at their hands. *It is the propertie of the wicked, to giue heede to falſe lips; and liers harken to naughty tongs:* Prou.17.4. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation for them that are moleſted and vexed vniuſtly for the Goſpels ſake, by clamorous and falſe accuſers: let them conſider what account God maketh of their malicious aduerſaries; he calleth them fooles, and derideth their practiſes; and therefore in the end it ſhall bee ſeene, that when they haue ſpet all their venome, they haue but ſhot a fooles bolt, and procured ſhame and ſorrow to themſelues.

Verſe. 19. *The ſinne ceaſeth not by the multitude of words: but he that refraineth his lips is wiſe.*

HE ſeemeth ſtill to proceed in the proſecution of the matter ſpoken of in the ſeuenteenth verſe, that men take an euil way for themſelues, which refuſe to be reproued. The words immediately going before theſe, declare how ſome reiect it, by

inward hatred and bitternesse of heart, and yet outwardly make semblance of great loue and friendshippe: others breake out into open profession of their discontentment and malice, by reprouing those that would helpe them out of their sinnes: and heere commeth a third sort, which would shift off all rebukes, by denying, defending, cloking, or colouring their faults, by excusing, and extenuating matters that are charged vpon them. But all is in vaine; the sinne will not bee blowne away with breath: and therefore hee sheweth that it is a point of wisedome to giue place by silence, and to take the blame vpon them.

Doct. A fault excused, is oft times increased. Ier.2.35.

The sinne ceaseth not, &c.] The multiplying of words doth make a bad cause rather worse then better. So *Ieremy* telleth the impenitent people, that were very forward to cleare themselues of their sinnes whereof they were accused: *Thou saiest, because I am guiltlesse, surely his wrath shall turne from me: behold, I wil enter with thee into iudgement, because thou saiest, I haue not sinned.* Their excuses were accusations; their denials were conuictions; their seeking impunitie without repentance, did hasten and augment their punishment.

Reason 1. First, when they defend or make things small trifles, which are vnlawfull to be done, they contradict the word of God and his truth, which no wit, nor art, nor eloquence shall bee able to preuaile against.

2 Secondly, when they hide their facts by deniall, or labour to supply their omissions, by assuming that to themselues which they neuer performed; the eye of the Lord doth behold their falshood, his eares doe heare how vntruely they iustifie themselues; he knoweth all their guiltinesse, and hee will make the world to know their guileful halting. Though *Saul* failed of obedience to the will of God, yet he arrogated the praise of fulfilling it: though *Samuel* by demonstation declared his sinne; yet hee sought to make an Apology for himselfe, and to lay all the offence vpon the people: but that course tooke none effect; it did him no good for body or soule; it nothing preserued his honour or estate; he was conuicted, and censured, and sentenced, and vtterly cast off, notwithstanding all his excuses.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, their owne conſciences apprehend euerie action and word, and intent of the heart, and the mouer of their whole life: and they will not bee illuded by the fraud of the lippes; but take occaſion thereby to paſſe a more heauie ſentence vpon them. 3

Fourthly, it is a ſinne of it ſelfe to bee giuen to ouermuch talke; as hauing ſelfe liking and raſhneſſe for the rootes thereof: and therefore it cannot poſſibly be a medicine to cure other ſinnes. 4

Inſtruction, to leaue off ſpeaking to men for the mitigation of our tranſgreſſions, and to ſpeake to our own hearts for iudging, and aggrauation of them to the Lord by acknowledgement, that we may be pardoned. *Vſe* 1.

For this is the way that hath the promiſe: Prou.28.13. *Hee that hideth his ſins ſhal not proſper: but he that confeſſeth and forſaketh them ſhall haue mercy.*

Conſolation to them that humbly yeeld to a rebuke without replies, that their ſtate is good, though their actions were bad: they are wiſe now in reſtraining their lippes from ſpeaking of ſinne, though they were fooliſh before to commit it. 2

Verſ.20. *The tongue of the iuſt man is as fined ſiluer: but the heart of the wicked is little worth.*

HE ſetteth forth the excellency of the ſpeech of godly men by compariſon; reſembling it to ſiluer that is purged and fined from the droſſe that was in it: becauſe a good man wil be carefull of his tongue, not onely that there be no mixture or filthineſſe and leaudneſſe in his words; but alſo to auoid all ſuperfluous and idle babbling, and ſo to open his mouth with holy wiſedome. Which is contrary in the wicked; becauſe there is a contrarie fountaine in him of ſinfulneſſe and corruption, and no matter of vertue and grace, which are the ſprings of all wholeſome ſpeeches. Thus therefore ſtanderh the *Antitheſis*: the tongue of the iuſt man is as fined ſiluer; becauſe his heart is pretious: but the tongue of the wicked is as droſſe; becauſe his heart is nothing worth.

The

Doct. 1 Good mens wealth is in their heart, and is vttered with the lips. Mat.12.35.

The tongue of the iuſt man, &c] The beſt wealth of a Chriſtian is laid vp in his heart, and diſburſed with his lips. And that is the meaning of our Sauiour when he ſaith, that *A good man out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth good things.* An euill man may haue coyne, and plate, and Iewels in his treaſurie, and yet haue no treaſure; and may draw mony out of his purſe, and yet haue no good, and doe no good therewithall: but to haue grace in the ſoule, and to vtter gracious words with the tongue, is proper to a good man, and the exerciſe good, and the fruit of it good to himſelfe and others. And albeit heere ſeeme to be a compariſon of equall, as though the tongue were iuſt of the ſame value and worth that fined ſiluer is; yet it is to be vnderſtood, that at leaſt it is ſo pure and pretious, but indeed farre beyond it in excellency.

Reaſon 1. Iames.1.17. Firſt, this is one of the good and perfect gifts which is from aboue, and commeth downe from the Father of lights: whereas ſiluer is a terreſtrial matter, euen earth it ſelfe digged out of the earth, and neuer did but grow in the ground.

2 Secondly, this is currant in heauen, and acceptable to God himſelfe; with whom gold and ſiluer are of ſmall eſtimation.

3 Prou.2.3.5. Thirdly, ſuch things are obtained by it, which no money can purchaſe; as wiſedome, and grace, and the aſſurance of Gods eternall fauour, and all other good things that concerne both ſoule and body. *Ezekias*, and *Iehoſaphat*, and other good Kings, could not haue preſerued themſelues by their purſes and treaſures, as they did by their praiers and holy exerciſes of their tongues. *Ionah* could not haue beene comforted nor holpen by the greateſt quantity of money, in the Whalles belly; where Acts.3.6,7. his prayer was verie effectuall. *Peter* could not haue giuen ſo good an almes to the poore creeple, if he had been ſtored with ſiluer and gold, as he did by the efficacy of his words, through the name of Ieſus Chriſt.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction: To ſhew our ſelues righteous, by putting away all obſcenitie of ſpeeches; *that neither filthineſſe, nor couetouſnes, be once named amongſt vs, nor fooliſh talking, nor ſcurrill, bitter, or vncomely ieſting, or any kind of rotten communication*, as the Apoſtle calleth it; *but onely that which is for the vſe of edifying, that*

it

it may miniſter grace to the hearers: Epheſ.5.4.and.4.29.

And eſpecially let vs beware of the droſſe of diſſimulation, vntruth, and falſehoode, which beſeeme not righteous perſons. Make no report for certaintie of any thing that is vncertaine, neither make a promiſe without a ſetled purpoſe, and reſolution of performance. The faithfulneſſe of *Boaz* in this caſe was ſo prooued, and made manifeſt, that when hee had once giuen his word to *Ruth*, *Naomy* biddeth her to build vpon it and not further to trouble her ſelfe: for ſaith ſhe, *The man will not be in reſt, vntill he haue finiſhed the matter this ſame day*: Ruth.3.18.

Conſolation, if good men, notwithſtanding their great infirmities and corruptions, haue yet ſuch ſinceritie in ſpeaking, and ſuch fidelitie in performing that which they ſpeake: how ſhall not the righteous God (in compariſon of whom all men are liars, and who is not ſo properly called true, as truth, and all his words veritie it ſelfe) how ſhall not hee, I ſay, fulfill all his promiſes, and ſtand to his couenants that hee hath made with his people? Hee hath vndertaken for their ſaluation, their maintenance, protection, ſafetie from Satan, deliuerance from tyrants and perſecutors, and ſhall not all this be accompliſhed? is not all pure mettall that hee pronounceth? *Is it not as ſiluer tried ſeuenfold in the fire?* Pſalm. 12.6. If hee ſhould faile of his word, he ſhould forget his truth; & in forgetting his truth, ſhould forgoe his nature, and conſequently ſhould forfeit his Deitie, which were an execrable thing ſo much as to conceiue. 2

But the heart of the wicked, &c.] Though ſinfull perſons make neuer ſo great a ſhew on the outſide, yet there is nothing within them worth anie thing. To that purpoſe tend the words of the Apoſtle collected out of the Pſalmes: *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe to be but vaine.* If the point had ſtood vpon mans opinion, there might eaſily haue been an error in it: but he bringeth the teſtimony of God, vpon ſure and infallible knowledge to confirme it. And whereas the Prophet nameth man indefinitely, that is, euery man vnregenerate: Pſal. 94.11. hee ſingleth out the chiefe and choiceſt of all the ſort of them, whoſe purpoſes ſeeme to bee of greateſt price, and moſt *Doct.*2. A wicked man hath his woſt ſide inward. 1.Cor.3.20.

likelie to preuaile, and ſaith that the thoughts of the wiſe men beſt qualified with art, and naturall parts, are not onely vaine, but verie vanitie, as the Pſalmiſt hath it.

Reaſons 1. Firſt, they are altogether deſtitute of the ſpirit of grace.

2 Secondly, the heart of man, without the ſpirit, is ſoule, and filthie, and an vncleane ſinke of all abominations.

3 Thirdlie, the ſtreames that iſſue from thence declare what the fountaine is, when all their words, and actions, and recreations, and imaginations are onely ſinfull and wicked: Hag. 2. 15. Tit. 1. 15. Gen. 6. 5.

4 Fourthly, Gods proceeding againſt them in his diſpleaſure maketh manifeſt how baſe they are: for hee knoweth how all things are to be priced. Since therfore he reiecteth and caſteth them away, it euidently appeareth that there is no goodneſſe in them. So ſaith *Ieremie, They ſhall call them reprobate ſiluer, becauſe the Lord hath reiected them*: Ier. 6. 30.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction, not too much to magnifie and admire them, nor too farre to depend vpon them. For better things are not certainely to be expected from them, then are in them. And therfore many times they make golden promiſes, and leaden performances, becauſe they haue but droſſie affections.

2 Conſolation, to poore Chriſtians in regard of their portion, notwithſtanding they come ſhort of the vngodly in goods and liuings. Manie ſinners be ſet vp in ſtate, and much worth in outward wealth, when as they bee worſe then bankrupts in their ſoules, and wholy deſtitute of all inward ſubſtance: and contrariwiſe though the Saints haue but ſmall ſtore of external riches, yet they be of great poſſeſſions in their hearts, and flow with plentie in their inward parts.

Verſ. 21. *The lippes of the righteous doe feede manie: but fooles die for want of wiſedome.*

BEfore was declared the excellencie of a good tongue, and well ſeaſoned ſpeech: and here are the effects of it commended, namely, the good that is wrought by it, the ſoules of many being edified therewith, and receiuing grace, and groweth

eth for ſaluation & comfort, as the body doth obtaine ſtrength, and nouriture, and refreſhing, by their meanes that miniſter wholeſome foode vnto it. And this is illuſtrated by the contrarie effect of wicked, and ignorant perſons, That they are ſo far from feeding others with knowledge and wiſedome, that they ſuffer themſelues to be ſtarued to death & deſtruction, through the want of it.

The lips of the righteous, &c.] It is the note of a faithfull man, To vſe his knowledge and other good gifts for the benefit of his brethren. In this ſenſe the Apoſtle ſaith, that *though hee were poore, yet he made many rich*: 2. Cor. 6. 10. His meane eſtate would not permit him, to beſtow monie, or ſuch kind of gifts as wealthie men vſe to diſtribute, becauſe he had no great plentie himſelfe: but that which he had moſt of, & others had moſt need of, that he moſt liberally communicated to all that would receiue it, whereſoeuer he came.

Doct. 1. He is the beſt man that doth others moſt good.

Firſt, godly men doe prouide themſelues of theſe celeſtiall graces, and therby are made able to participate them to others. They haue a learning eare, & therefore alſo a teaching tongue: they be couetous of ſpirituall gifts, and therefore alſo liberall of them: they are great eaters, and (as we may ſay) haue an appetite to deuoure all, and therefore would haue euerie man to take part with them. In earthly commodities, men are of a contrarie diſpoſition: for as they are the more greedie of getting to themſelues, ſo are they more niggardly in withholding from others: and as any one doth ſwallow vp more, the leſſe is left for the reſt of the companie: but in heauenly things it commeth to paſſe that none be ſo frank and free, as they whoſe deſires be moſt greedy of hauing: and none doe ſaue, and leaue ſo much for the vſe of their brethren, as they that take their full meale, and eate as much as poſſibly they can. To take the fruition of the graces of God, is the way to make prouiſion of them for our neighbours: and to beſtow vpon others, is the meanes to retaine and augment them to our ſelues.

Reaſon 1.

Secondly, they haue an vnderſtanding heart, and holy diſcretion to giue to euerie one ſuch a portion, as is fitteſt for the health of his ſoule: ſome are ignorant, and haue needе of in-

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ſtruction: ſome are vnrulie, and haue neede of rebuke: ſome are weake, and haue neede to bee confirmed: ſome are fearefull and feeble, and haue need of comfort, and incouragement. All theſe duties will a wiſe and righteous man exerciſe, according to the proportion, meaſure and degrees of his wiſedome, and righteouſneſſe.

3 Thirdlie, their lips will ſend a meſſage to heauen, and deale with the Lord to relieue them, whoſe wants themſelues are not able to ſupplie. And ſo they doe not onely feede the ſoules, but euen the bodies of verie manie, when their prayers and prayſes are accepted of God, and made effectuall, for the fruitfulnes of the earth: And to that purpoſe tendeth the praier of the Prophet, Pſalm.67.5.6. *Let the people praiſe thee, O God: let all the people praiſe thee. Then ſhall the earth bring forth her increaſe, and God, euen our God ſhall bleſſe vs.* To the ſame effect is
Ioel.2.17.19. the exhortation that is giuen by *Ioel* for the healing of the miſeries of his time. *Let the Prieſts, the Miniſters of the Lord, weepe betweene the porch and the altar: and let them ſay, ſpare thy people, O Lord, &c. Then will the Lord anſwere, and ſay vnto his people, behold I will ſend you corne, and wine, and oyle, and you ſhall be ſatisfied therewith.* And by this meanes *Eliah* did feede all Iſrael, by procuring raine, for want whereof they were like to periſh. All *Achabs* wealth, and the riches and power of the whole kingdome were inſufficient for ſuch a worke.

Vſe 1. Reproofe of them that neuer miniſtred anie thing, but infection to their people for their ſoules. No child, no ſeruant, no not the wife of their owne boſome, had euer any helpe by them to ſaluation. Their houſes bee nurſeries and ſeminaries of ſwearing, and gaming, and drinking, and all kindes of ſinfulneſſe. An ignorant and vngodlie familie ſo allowed, and continued, doth conuince the gouernour to be a ſinner, a foole, and a kind of murtherer of himſelfe, as the other part of the verſe ſheweth, which ſhall be paſſed ouer now, becauſe it hath been partly handled alreadie, and muſt be againe hereafter.

2 Secondly, inſtruction to make choice of habitation, and ſocietie with iuſt men: for much commoditie is to bee had in their companie, by the benefit of their fruitfull tongue.

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Verſ.22. *The bleſſing of the Lord it doth make rich: and he addeth no ſorrowes with it.*

THe purpoſe and driſt of theſe words is, to ſhew the preeminence that Gods people haue aboue the men of the world: that whereas the wicked haue nothing but their owne hands, and carnall meanes to truſt vnto for their eſtate, ſuch as be godly, haue God to prouide for them; and his goodneſſe onely doth make rich, and they onely are inriched by him. But becauſe his enemies haue vſually more ſtore of goods then his children; and thereby it may ſeeme, that either men may bee rich without his bleſſing, or elſe that hee is more prouident for ſinners then for Saints; therefore hee ſheweth the difference; That troubles and vexations are intermingled with the goods of the wicked, and his ſeruants are freed from them. Yet it is not ſo to be conceiued, as though no good men had any troubles with their riches; and that whoſoeuer doe find griefe and perturbations in theſe earthly things, were depriued of the bleſſing of God, and teſtimonies of his fauour: but this is the meaning, that ſo farre as he doth beſtowe them, and they depend vpon him for them, ſo farre they eſcape from vexations: ſo that the cares and troubles grow meerely from their owne infirmities.

The bleſſing, &c.] As euerlaſting life is the gift of God; ſo is a good & comfortable eſtate in this world. *Dauid* in his thankſgiuing to God, maketh a free confeſſion thereof, ſaying; *Both riches and honour come of thee*, &c. 1. Chron. 29. 12. *Doct.* A comfortable eſtate is a bleſſing of God.

Firſt, neither the commodiouſneſſe of any trade, nor skil, nor ſtrength, nor diligence can preuaile, vnleſſe hee giue ſucceſſe. And therfore the holy Ghoſt teacheth in the Pſalms; that without him, *It is in vaine for men to riſe early, and to lie downe late, and to eate the bread of ſorrow*: Pſal. 127. 2. And therefore *Moſes* giueth that ſerious admonition; *Beware leſt thou ſay in thine heart, my power, and the ſtrength of mine owne hand hath prepared me this abundance. But remember the Lord thy God: for it is he which giueth thee power to get ſubſtance.* Deut. 17. 18. *Reaſons* 1.

2 Secondly, he alone worketh contentment, which is an high degree of richneſſe.

3 Thirdly, hee giueth a chearefull heart with the portion, and cauſeth them to take their part of their poſſeſſions with comfort: Eccleſ.2.24.

4 Fourthly, he preſerueth them from the feares of loſſes whiles they enioy their goods, and from immoderate ſorrow if their ſubſtance bee taken away; as that appeared in the example of *Iob*, who by his patience declared himſelfe to bee as rich when all his goods were gone, as he was at that time when he poſſeſſed them all.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction: to vſe the meanes that we may be bleſſed, and partakers of his promiſes. And that is: firſt, by pietie and religion. For ſo runneth the promiſe; *Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his commandements. Riches and treaſures ſhall be in his houſe:* Pſal.112.1.3. Secondly, by calling vpon the name of God, and exerciſe of prayer for ſuch things as are needful for vs. For, the neglect of this dutie, the Apoſtle ſheweth to be the cauſe of their want & needineſſe; Iam. 4.2. *Ye fight, and warre, and get nothing; becauſe ye aske not.* Thirdly, by the good imployment and vſage of thoſe things which we enioy already, either to his owne ſeruices, or reliefe of his poore diſtreſſed people: *If we honor the Lord with our riches, and with the firſt fruits of all our increaſe, our barnes ſhall be filled with abundance*, &c. Chap.3.9,10. And ſo, *liberall perſons are promiſed to haue plenty:* Prou.11.25. Fourthly, by mercy and liberality to them that are in neceſſitie: Prou.11.24.25. Fifthly, by faithfullneſſe and diligence in our places & callings; as hath been ſhewed in the fourth verſe.

2 Conſolation to ſuch as ſerue him, that they ſhall ſurely bee ſtored with all ſufficiencie. Thoſe whom hee will raiſe vp to wealth ſhall certainely riſe, though neuer ſo many ſeeke to hold them downe: for who ſhall hold backe his hands from giuing his owne vnto his owne. How marueilouſly were *Abraham* and *Iacob* enriched among ſtrangers and infidels, not onely aliants from their religion, but vowed enemies to their nation? And where in his wiſedome hee ſeeth it not fit to fill

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their houſes with amplitude of ſubſtance, hee will make few things to yeelde manie comforts, and ſmall things to bee of great force, and meane things to bee verie precious and excellent. And in this ſenſe it is ſaid, that *A ſmall thing vnto the iuſt man, is better then great riches to the wicked and mightie:* Pſal. 37.16.

Terrour for the wicked, that they can neuer be rich: though they haue riches, yet they are not rich, but onely plagued with a multitude of torments and vexations: Eccleſ. 2.26. 3

Verſ. 23. *It is a paſtime to a foole to commit wickedneſſe: but Wiſedome* is the delight *of a man of vnderſtanding.*

IT *is a paſtime to a foole to commit wickedneſſe*, &c.] That is, ſinfull men take great pleaſure in doing that which is euill, as if it were a ſport or recreation to them: and it is as much ioy and refreſhing to him that is godly wiſe, both to get wiſedome, and to performe all the good exerciſes thereof.

Sinne is the delight of ſinners; and grace of good men. Of the one ſort wee haue many teſtimonies in this booke; but in the ſecond Chapter eſpecially, verſe 14. *They delight in doing euill*, and *reioyce in wicked frowardneſſe*. And in the fourth Chapter, verſe 17. it is ſaid; *that they eate the bread of wickedneſſe, and drinke the wine of violence: it is meate and drinke vnto them to doe miſchiefe*. Of the other ſort, the Prophet is an example and patterne, in the hundreth and nineteenth Pſalme: where, in many places hee profeſſeth his ſingular comfort and delight that hee conceiueth in the heauenly word of God; as when he ſaith; *How ſweete are thy promiſes vnto my mouth? yea more then honie vnto my mouth. And they are the ioy of mine heart:* Pſal. 119.103.111. *Doct.* Sinne is a paſtime to ſinners, and grace is the ioy of good men.

Firſt, this contrarietie ariſeth from the contrarie cauſes of theſe contrarie likings. All wicked men doe loue ſinne, and it is as deare vnto them as the members of their owne bodies. And all godlie men doe loue righteouſneſſe, and rather deſire to be deliuered from life, then ſeparated from grace and the ſeruice of God. Now it is a perpetuall rule which neuer faileth *Reaſon* 1.

leth that whatſoeuer any man loueth moſt, that he will alwaies moſt dilight in. Secondly, wicked men are fleſhly; and therefore liue after the fleſh, and ſauour of the things of the fleſh, and delight in the works of the fleſh. And godly men are led by the Spirit, and ſauour of the things of the Spirit, and reioyce in the fruits of the Spirit.

2 Secondly, it is ſeene in the contrary effects of both ſides. Firſt, wicked men runne violently to ſinne, and will not deſiſt from their diuelliſh purpoſes, before they haue effected them: though godly men through natural corruptions and temptations, haue ſometimes a proneneſſe and inclination to euill; yet they may be eaſily retracted by counſell and admonition; as *Dauid* was from ſlaying of *Nabal*; but they conſtantly proceede to the performance of euery good dutie. Secondly, wicked men doe meditate in the night, and endeuour in the day to fulfill their ſinfull deſires. *They worke wickedneſſe vpon their beds, and when the morning is light, they practiſe it; becauſe their hand hath power:* Micah 2.1. Godly men doe meditate in the night, and indeuour in the day to know and obey the holy wil of the Lord. As *Iſaias* ſpeaketh in the perſon of all the faithfull; *With my ſoule haue I deſired thee in the night, and with my ſpirit within me will I ſeeke thee in the morning:* Iſa. 26.6. Thirdly, when wicked men haue accompliſhed their ſinfull deſires, they ſurfet with gladneſſe: when they are diſappointed, they are filled with bitter vexation. *For they cannot ſleepe except they haue done euill; & their ſleepe departeth, except they cauſe ſome to fall. For they eate the bread of wickedneſſe, and drinke the wine of violence:* Prou. 4.16.17. When godly men haue committed ſinne, it bringeth anguiſh vpon their hearts; when they haue performed any Chriſtian ſeruice, it is a comfortable refreſhing to their ſoules. Fourthly, the cuſtome of ſinning is *ſo ſweete* to the wicked, *that they will not forſake it*, but take them for their enemies that ſhall diſſwade them from it: the yoke of ſinne is heauie to the godly, that they ſtill ſtriue to be disburthened of it, and the yoke of Ieſus ſo eaſie, that they willingly yeelde themſelues to it, and account them their beſt friends, that ſhall helpe them againſt the one, and further them to the other.

Iob. 20.12.

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Confutation, of the erroneous opinion of thoſe, that allowing themſelues in the purſuit of all ſinfull pleaſures, and profits, euen ſeruing their luſts with delight, and working vncleanneſſe with greedineſſe, doe yet vndertake for the ſafetie of their owne ſoules, and challenge the name, and prerogatiue of righteous men. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation, to them that are wearied with the rebellious motions of the fleſh, that are not able vtterly to ſubdue the remnants of ſinne, and their owne naturall diſpoſition, but that ſometimes their pride giueth them a wound; ſometimes their rage breaketh out ſuddainly, & ſtriketh them ſo, that the prints of the ſtrokes are ſeene, and the ſcarres which remaine after them; ſometimes couetouſnes preſſeth ſo hard vpon them, that it maketh them to giue ground, yea, it taketh, and impriſoneth them: yet if they hate theſe corruptions the more becauſe they haue been hurt by them; if they labour for libertie, and groane for deliuerance out of their captiuity, they are ſtil reputed wiſe, and the faithfull ſouldiers, and ſeruants of Chriſt. 2.

Verſ. 24. *That which the wicked feareth, ſhall come vpon him: but God will graunt the deſire of the righteous.*

THe condemnation in the world to come, which vngodly men through the guiltineſſe of their conſciences are often ſummoned vnto, when God ſhal draw their ſoule out of their bodie, they ſhall certainly fall into. And thoſe iudgements, and miſeries of this life, which they moſt hate, though they hope to eſcape them, they are in danger to bring vpon themſelues.

And that which is moſt deſirable, and will be moſt comfortable to Chriſtians, the Lord which knoweth what is moſt acceptable to them, and profitable for them, will in due ſeaſon beſtow vpon them.

That which the wicked feareth, &c.] Whatſoeuer is moſt contrarie to the affection, and liking of ſinfull perſons, that they may expect to bee plagued withall. This the Lord threatned to the rebellious and obſtinate Iewes by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *I will take from them their power, the ioy of their honour, the pleaſure* *Doct.* 1 That which ill men moſt feare ſhall ſurely befall them.

ſure of their eies, and the deſire of their heart, their ſonnes and their daughters: Ezek.24.25. The things which they are altogether vnwilling to depart with, thoſe would hee ſtrip them of: and conſequently, that which they would be verie loath to beare, ſhould heauily be laid vpon them.

Reaſon 1. First, ordinarilie they feare that which is the moſt proportionable, and proper puniſhment of their offences. As proud men haue nothing in ſo great deteſtation, as reproch, and contempt: and nothing is ſo much due vnto them as to be contemned.

2 Secondlie, their feare and dread of falling into thoſe euils, doth cauſe them to ſeeke the preuention of them by euill meanes, and thereby they take the way to inforce the ſpeedie execution of them. As they that would flie farre from neceſſitie and want, by haſtie getting of riches and ſubſtance, do very often prouoke pouertie to come ſwiftly with violence vpon them. For this is the way that hath the promiſe: Prou.28.13. *He that hideth his ſinnes ſhall not proſper: but he that confeſſeth, and forſaketh them, ſhall haue mercie.*

3 Thirdly, the Lord doth make choice of, and ſingleth out ſuch maner of iudgements as ſhal moſt ſting them, and come neereſt to their hearts, and thoſe are they which are moſt terrible to them. What could haue been ſo greeuous to *Haman*, as firſt to be made *Mordecaies* page, and then afterwards to be hanged vpon the gallowes; then which nothing could bee inuented more horrible to him, & therefore he had prouided it for *Mordecai* whom he moſt mortally hated?

Ioel.1.5. Iſa.3.16.17.&c.

Vſe. Inſtruction, firſt to fence our ſelues againſt the imitation of the wicked, and deſire of their ſtate, by conſidering how wretched and miſerable their condition is. Euen preſentlie they are arreſted, and after a ſort apprehended with feares: hell and deſtruction doe ſometimes ſhew themſelues vnto their ſoules; and in time to come, vnleſſe they repent, they ſhall haue full poſſeſſion of them. Secondly, to free our ſelues from all our feares, by flying to the Lord for ſuccour, againſt the miſchiefes which wee would not fall into, and for repentance and humiliation againſt the ſinnes that would draw them vpon our heads.

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But God will graunt, &c.] The beſt way to haue our willes ſatisfied, is to be godly. For to ſuch there is a promiſe made, that *God will fulfill the deſires of them that feare him.* Wherein yet theſe rules are to bee obſerued: Firſt, that our will bee agreeable to Gods will, the deſire muſt bee holy, and ſeaſoned with the ſpirit; and not carnall, and corrupted by the fleſh. *Dauid* in a paſſion would needes know how long hee was to liue. And *Iames* and *Iohn* would haue fire to come from heauen to deſtroy a whole towne, and another time they made ſute to bee the ſecond men of the whole earth. Theſe petitions were not graunted, becauſe they were not aduiſedly asked, nor ſafe for them to be obtained. Secondly, that ſometimes lawfull deſires are not performed in the ſame kinde, but exchanged for better, and that which doth more good is beſtowed in ſtead of them. *Moſes* deſired to enter into the land of Canaan, hee was denied that, but hee entred ſooner into the heauenly and bleſſed reſt of euerlaſting life. *Paul* would haue bin perfectly freed from al originall corruption, or at leaſt from the ſtirrings, and working of it, but it ſtood not with the wiſedome of God to yeeld that vnto him: but he aſſiſted him with grace againſt it, which was much more for his owne glorie, and the ſound comfort of *Pauls* conſcience. Thirdly, that we tarry the Lords leaſure, and depend on his hand, to miniſter in fitteſt time, all thoſe good things which our ſoules deſire, and ſo we ſhall not faile to receiue them, when he ſeeth that they will be moſt expedient for vs.

Doct.2. Good mens deſires ſhall be graunted.

Pſal.14.5.19.

Firſt, he raiſeth vp the heart to ſeeke for them, he enclineth the ſoule, ſo much to long after them, and therefore it was his purpoſe to beſtow them. For thereby the Prophet taketh footing for aſſurance of helpe to Gods diſtreſſed ſeruants, crying vnto him: *Lord, thou heareſt the deſire of the poore: thou preparest their heart: thou bendeſt thine eare to them.* Pſalme. 10.17.

Reaſon 1.

Secondly, he giueth the ſpirit of faith and prayer, which will haue no nay: they neuer ſuſtaine any repulſe; whatſoeuer they lay hold on, they make their owne. And therefore Saint *Iohn* ſaith, that *this is the aſſurance that we haue in God, that if we aske*

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any thing according to his will, he heareth vs. And if we know that he heareth vs, what ſoeuer we aske, we know that we ſhal haue the petitions that we deſire of him: 1.Ioh.5.14.15.

3 Thirdly, he calleth vs to him by commandement to ſeeke all good things at his hand, and incourageth vs to the ſame by promiſes: and therfore his owne truth is our ſecuritie for them.

4 Fourthly, his al-ſufficiencie, and abſolute abilitie for performance, doth abundantly exceede all the deſires of all the faithfull, yea, of all creatures, though they were neuer ſo ample and feruent. For hee is able to doe abundantly aboue all that wee aske or thinke, Epheſ.3.20.

Vſe 1. First, conſolation to righteous men, againſt the defects that are in their ſoules, and the neceſſities of ſtate, and bodie; they are beſt prouided for both: for ſo great is the credit which they haue in the Court of heauen, and their fauour with the King of heauen, that they aske, and haue; deſire, and preuaile: and if they be not forward enough that waies, they ſhal be called vpon to put in their petitions, and inlarge their deſires. *Aske*, ſaith our Sauiour, *and ye ſhall receiue, that your ioy may bee full*: Ioh.16.24. *Open thy mouth wide*, ſaith the Lord, *and I will fill it*: Pſalm.81.10.

2 Secondly, terror for their enemies, that by tyrannie and violence compell them to complaine of them. So farre as the Lord is readie to gratifie them by graunting all good things which they aske, ſo farre is he alſo prouoked to puniſh their aduerſaries and oppreſſors that cauſe them to crie.

Verſ.25. *As the whirle winde paſſeth, ſo is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an euerlaſting foundation.*

THe meaning of the words is, that vngodly men, howſoeuer they flouriſh for a time, yet doe ſuddainly come to ruine, & deſtruction; as the whirle-wind ſwiftly bloweth ouer, & is leſſe conſtant, and permanent, than the ordinarie winde is, though there bee no ſtabilitie in any. But when it is ſaid, *they are no more*, he doth not intimate any mortalitie of their ſoules, as though they ſhould be wholly diſſolued as brute beaſts: for their

their ſoules are euerlaſting as well as Gods people, and their bodies ſhall be raiſed vp againe at the day of the Lord, as well as the Saints: but it is their hope and happineſſe, and not their being that periſheth, they ſhall neuer recouer any good eſtate any more. Now againſt theſe are ſet the righteous, whoſe ſoule and body, and bleſſednesſe, haue a ſetled ſafetie, as a foundation that can neuer bee remoued. So that this is the oppoſition: the wicked are as a whirle-winde, and ſo are no more: but the righteous are like a firme foundation, and ſo perpetually remaine.

Though the ſtate of the vngodly bee more ruffling then the ſeruants of God; yet the ſtate of Gods ſeruants is more certaine and ſtable then the vngodly ones. The whirle-winde mounteth aloft, and toſſeth vp hay, and ſtraw, and ſtubble, and filleth mens eyes with duſt, and commeth violently vpon them with a bluſtering blaſt; but immediately it is gone and paſſed farre away. The foundation lieth low in the ground, & is neither ſeene nor heard; yet there it continueth immoueable for many generations. The vnconſtant and tickle eſtate of wicked men, is fitly expreſſed by liuely compariſons in the propheſie of *Hoſea*; *They ſhall be as the morning cloud, and as the morning deaw that paſſeth away; as the chaffe that is driuẽ with a whirle-wind out of the floore, and as the ſmoke that goeth out of the chimney.* The contrary firmitude & ſtability of the godly, is by our Sauiour himſelfe likened to an houſe that is built on a rocke: *and the raine fell, and the floods came, and the windes blew, and beate that houſe, and it fel not; for it was grounded on a rocke.*

Doct. Vngodly men haue faire ſhewes, but good men haue a firme foundation.

Hoſ.13.3.

Matth.7.25.

Firſt, the one ſort haue been as vnconſtant in their waies, and as eaſily blowne from ſinne to ſinne, as the chaffe, and duſt, and withered leaues haue been carried vp and downe with the wind: and if they haue entred into any good courſe, there hath been no more ſtedfaſtneſſe in them, then is in the morning cloud and morning deaw: Iſay 64. 6. Hoſ. 6. 4. The other haue rooted and ſetled as well in faith, as in all faithfull behauiour: and for theſe cauſes the one ſide flitteth away, and is gone to miſerie; and the other remaine happy and bleſſed for euer.

Reaſon 1.

2 Secondly, the one ſort haue God and his Angels to purſue and puſh them away: the other haue God and his Angels to vphold and confirme them, that they be not moued from the fruition of his ſauour.

Vſe 1. Terrour for ſinfull men, whoſe ſhort and momentanie proſperitie ſhall ſo ſpeedily and ſodainely be turned into miſerie.

2 Inſtruction: firſt, not to affect the pleaſures of ſinne, wherein may bee a continuall expectation of ſuddaine deſtruction. Secondly, not to repoſe affiance in any wicked perſon. For though there were ſome conſtancie in their hearts or mouthes, (which ſeldome or neuer falleth out) yet there is none in their life and eſtate. Pſal.146.3,4. *Put not your truſt in man, nor in the ſonne of man: for there is no helpe in him, his breath departeth, and he returneth to his earth; then his thoughts periſh.*

3 Conſolation to ſuch as are moleſted with the boyſterous tempeſts of wicked men; though they roare loud, they ſhall not rage long; the Lord will put a ſpeedy end to their crueltie. Which was an argument that the Prophet vſed to confirme the hearts of ſuch as were oppreſſed with violence and vexations in his time; *The meeke in the Lord ſhall receiue ioy againe, and the poore men ſhall reioyce in the holy one of Iſrael. For, the cruell man ſhall ceaſe, and the ſkornefull ſhal be conſumed, and all that haſted to iniquitie ſhall be cut off:* Iſai.29.19,20.

Verſ.26. *As vineger is to the teeth, and ſmoke to the eyes; ſo is the ſlothfull to them that ſend him.*

Doct. We muſt be carefull whom we imploy in our affaires.

AS *vineger*, &c.] That is, too much vineger, or other things that bee ſharpe and ſoure, doe ſet the teeth on edge; and ſmoke doth bring both ſmart and hurt to the eyes: ſo doth the ſlothfull perſon, or he that is giuen to any other leaud behauior, worke vexation of hart to them that ſend him, or commit matter of moment vnto him.

He that imployeth in any ſeruice vnworthy and careleſſe perſons, ſhall bring ſorrow and moleſtation vpon himſelfe.

There is another Prouerbe which tendeth to the ſame purpoſe, though the ſimilitude be different; as though hee ſhould

cut

cut off his meſſengers feet: ſo he drinketh violence or hurt, that ſendeth a meſſage by a foole: Prou. 26.6. He doth as much iniurie to himſelfe, as if he ſhould maime his meſſenger of his feete, or make him lame of his legs: for as the one in that caſe, ſhould not bee able to diſpatch his iourney; ſo neither can the other well performe the things that are committed to his care and wiſedome. It is a ſpeech that is ordinary in vſe; that he muſt neuer looke to ſpeede well that ſendeth a foole on his errand.

Reaſons 1. First, there is perill of falſhood and treachery, or of much remiſneſſe and negligence, or want of diſcretion, and skilfulneſſe: by all which there groweth hurt, or loſſe, or trouble to him that putteth him in truſt with his affaires; as *Mephiboſheth* and *Benhadad* found by the ſeruices of *Ziba* and *Hazael*.

2 The curſe of God doth vſually accompanie the actions and waies of curſed ſinners: & therefore they that aduenture to entertain thē, haue many times a part of the puniſhment with thē.

3 Thirdly, al the faults & abſurdities in word or work, of fooliſh and ſinful ſeruants, are imputed to the reproch of their maſters that imploy thē; & ſo the ſorrow is cauſed by ſhame & infamie.

4 Fourthly, the contrarie will cleare the truth of this point. For if good ſeruants and faithfull meſſengers, bee for the comfort, and credit, the ſafetie and profit of ſuch as doe vſe them! then they that are altogether of another maner of affection and diſpoſition, cannot but worke another manner of effects and conſequents.

Vſe 1. Admonition: to bee verie heedefull to auoide that noiſome ſin of ſlothfulneſſe, which bringeth ſo many miſchiefes with it, both to our ſelues for ſoule, and bodie, and ſtate, and name: and to others alſo; and thoſe eſpecially whom in ſpeciall manner we owe duty vnto.

2 Secondly, to make a wiſe choice, prouidently of ſuch as wee haue occaſion to vſe in anie buſineſſe, that their induſtrie and diligence, their prudencie and diſcretion, their faithfulneſſe and ſound dealing, may bee a refreſhing, and not a torment to vs. And of the benefit that commeth by ſuch, it is ſpoken in the fiue and twentieth Chapter, verſe 13. *As the coolneſſe of ſnowe water* (for that is the meaning) *in the time of harueſt*

harueſt, ſo is a faithfull meſſenger to them that ſend him; for he refreſheth the ſoule of his maſters. If we haue obtained ſuch as bee not as ſmoke to offend our eyes, but our eyes may behold them and their good behauiour with delight, let vs not be vineger to their teeth, or ſmoke to their eyes: let not our ſoureneſſe and diſcontentment, our nigardlineſſe and ouermuch ſparing, bee any meanes of their diſcouragement. Deale kindly with them, and be liberall to them, that thou maieſt not onely retaine them ſtill to be thy ſeruants, but giue all good furtherance to the continuance of their vprightneſſe.

Verſ.27. *The feare of the Lord increaſeth the daies: but the yeares of the wicked are cut ſhort.*

THe *feare of the Lord*, &c.] That is, true pietie and religion, with the exerciſe alſo of iuſtice and righteouſneſſe. *Increaſeth the daies*; That is, as a meanes it preſerueth thoſe that are indued with it, from an vntimely death. *But the yeares of the wicked ſhal be cut off.* Their vngodly and ſinfull courſe of life is ſometimes an inſtrument to bring them ſpeedily to their end; as by ſurfets and euill diſeaſes, or falling into the hands of the Magiſtrate, or by quarrelling, and ſuch like: Sometimes it prouoketh the Lord to ſtay them in the middeſt of their race, and not to ſuffer them to come to that age, which by their ſtrength and conſtitution of body they might haue attained vnto. And in this ſenſe the Prophet ſaith in the Pſalmes; that *the wicked ſhall not liue out halfe their daies.* This doctrine of this verſe hath been handled already in the eleueth verſe of the former Chapter.

Pſal.55.23.

Verſ.28. *The patient abiding of the righteous ſhall be gladneſſe: but the hope of the wicked ſhall periſh.*

AFter that the children of God haue once imbraced his promiſes, afflictions & temptations do vſually enſue thereupon, that it would ſeeme to ſenſe and fleſhly reaſon, that miſerie and troubles were the only rewards of pietie and obedience, & nothing elſe performed to them that truſt in his word. Now there-

therefore he sheweth that a better state & condition remaineth for them: that their sorrow shall be turned into ioy, and their mourning into gladnes, when the Lord shal deliuer them from troubles, and fulfill all his promises. Which is illustrated and further amplified by the contrarie case of the wicked: which howsoeuer now they seeme to haue the preheminence, and are most likely to preuaile hereafter, shall yet be depriued of their present prosperitie, and frustrated of all future expectation. This then is the opposition: The hope of the righteous shall preuaile, and bring them gladnesse: but the hope of the wicked shall perish, and so worke them sorrow.

The patient abiding, &c.] They which depend on God in their afflictions, shall in due season be deliuered from them. Vpon this ground an exhortation is raised in another place of this booke. *Let thy heart be in the feare of the Lord continually. For surely there is an end, and thy hope shall not be cut off.* Prou. 23. 17. 18. Though troubles and sorrowes are in appearance, perpetual and endles, yet they are but temporary, and come quickly to an end; though hope and possibilitie of helpe seeme readie continually to vanish away, yet it neuer ceaseth, nor is taken away. *Doct.* 1 They that in affliction wait on God, shall timely finde ease.

First, there is nothing in all the world that is more infallibly assured of certaine successe, then the hope of Christians. It neuer misseth of that which it aimeth at, nor any time disappointeth them that possesse it, Rom. 5. 5. For faith doth support, and the truth and fidelitie of God himselfe is the foundation of it. *Reason* 1.

Secondly, that which is long delaied, and much waited for is the more welcome, and acceptable, when it is performed: so saith the holy Ghost. *The hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart: but when desire commeth, it is a tree of life.* The vertue of it cureth all the former faintings, and the delightful taste doth swallow vp all the sorrowes. If *Isaac* had been borne to *Abraham*, or *Iacob* to *Isaac* the first yeere after they were maried. their ioy would haue been but ordinarie, whereas the long barrennesse made their births exceeding comfortable to them, as the benefits were memorable to posteritie. 2 Prou. 13 11.

Thirdlie, the delay doth draw out manie prayers to God, and 3

and maketh way to attention at the miniſterie of the word, it helpeth meditation, it leadeth to faithfull comforters, it furthereth good cõferences, it procureth all good exerciſes; & al theſe good exerciſes procure a proportionable meaſure of comfort.

Fourthly, it giueth men experience of their faith, & patience, and conſtancy, which all declare & reſtifie the ſoundnes and ſincerity of the heart, which is the root of ſound & holy comfort.

Fifthly, the lõger it is before the Lord doth performe his promiſes, the larger his mercies are when he doth beſtow his bleſſings; when he prolongeth his ſeeding, he prouideth a plentiful harueſt; when he doth not preſently giue the reward, he taketh time to tell out much, that his gifts may be the greater.

Vſe 1. Incouragement to patience: in all diſtreſſes, let vs tarrie the Lords leaſure, and wait vpon him; and he hath by word & writing, by ſeale & oath, vndertaken to deliuer vs out of them. Our Sauiour promiſeth, that in the greateſt troubles, when they ſhould be moſt violently, & treacherouſly, and vnnaturally perſecuted, not only of forraine aduerſaries, but of their domeſticall familiars, of their friends, of their kinſmen, of their brethrẽ, of their owne parents; yet *not one haire of their heads ſhould periſh*. Their haires and heads might be cut off, and life might be taken away, but not loſt: they ſhould not be vainly beſtowed, without good effect in a holy cauſe. Onely he admoniſheth vs, Luk. 21. 18, 19. *to poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience*. If we keepe all ſound within, euery thing ſhall be ſafe both within and without. And then we begin to loſe our aduantage, when wee leaue the poſſeſſion of our ſelues, and the power of our ſoules through diſtempers.

Reproofe of them that make more haſte then good ſpeed to ſhake off their croſſes by corrupt courſes. They depriue the Lord of that honor which they ſhould yeeld to him, in waiting for his helpe; and themſelues of that comfort which hee would haue yeelded to them, together with his helpe. Their ioy will wither as corne that is cut downe before it be ripe, and become abortiue as a ſtill-borne child, whereof the mother miſcarrieth.

Doct. 2. Ill men ſeeking to be happy. *But the hope*, &c.] Vngodly men beguile themſelues with a deceitfull expectation of happines. For the ſame point is ſhortly after repeated againe in the next chapter, verſ. 7. *When a wicked*

ed man dieth, his hope periſheth. When good men enter vpon poſ- pie deceiue
ſeſſion of their happie eſtate, the terme of ſinners is out, & their themſelues.
leaſe determined, and growne out of date.

Firſt, the Lord knoweth their purpoſes, deſires, and expecta- *Reaſon* 1.
tions, and will duely defeate them of the ſame: Pſalm. 1. 6.

Secondly, their hope ariſeth not from faith, nor is grounded 2
on the promiſes of the word, but on ſenſe and ſight of preſent proſperitie.

Thirdly, they hope for things which are altogether impoſſi- 3
ble to come to paſſe. As firſt, to ſee the euerſion and ouerthrow of Gods people. As *Micah* bringeth them in, both vaunting of their expectation, and failing of their purpoſe. *Manie nations,* ſaith he to the Church, *are gathered againſt thee, ſaying, Now ſhal Zion be condemned, and our eie ſhall looke vpon Zion, But they know not the thoughts of the Lord: they vnderſtand not his counſel; for he ſhal gather them as the ſheaues in the barne*: Micah. 4. 11. 12 They hoped that the Saints ſhould haue been cruſhed and deſtroied becauſe of their preciſeneſſe, and pouerty: but God had appointed themſelues to be plagued, and threſhed, becauſe of their malice and wickednes. Secondly, that God ſhould faile of his iuſtice and truth in executing his threatnings denounced againſt them. For ſo the wicked illude themſelues: Deut. 29. 19. *I ſhal haue peace, though I walke after the ſtubbornnes of mine own hart:* Whom the Lord therfore ſaith expreſly, he *wil not be merciful vnto; but* his *wrath & ielouſy ſhal ſmoke againſt them.* Thirdly, to take their fill of ſinful pleaſures here & to enioy alſo felicitie and happines in the life to come. Which is no more poſſible for any to obtain, then was for the voluptuous rich man: Luk. 6. 21.

Confutation and terrors for them that liue ignorantly, and *Vſe.*
impiouſly, and yet truſt to die bleſſedly, & obtaine euerlaſting life. They haue no other euidence for ſafetie from damnation, but their opinion that they haue a ſtrong faith, and whatſoeuer the preachers ſay, they regard it not; they truſt that God will be more mercifull then ſo, they hope to be ſaued as well as the beſt of them all. For ſo their compariſons run: ordinary Chriſtians are too baſe for them to compare with, they muſt equalize themſelues with the chiefe and principall.

Verſ.29. *The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the vpright man: but feare ſhall be to the workers of iniquitie.*

BY the way of the Lord, is meant the whole adminiſtration, both of his word, wherby he maketh his will knowne, and of his ſpirit whereby hee giueth grace, and of his prouidence, whereby he protecteth his ſeruants, and performeth all good things vnto them. By euery one of theſe meanes, doth he eſtabliſh and confirme both the hearts and ſtates of ſuch as be faithfull. But as for the wicked, howſoeuer he ſuffer them for a time to proceed in their vngodly waies without any great croſſes, yet at laſt he executeth ſuch iudgements vpon them, as the very ſight therof cauſeth them to quake and tremble. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition; The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the vpright, for preſeruation, and therefore it worketh boldnes: but it weakneth the wicked for deſtruction, and therfore it bringeth feare.

Doct.1. *The way of the Lord* &c. They that are moſt godly, are in beſt ſafetie. The point hath been handled in the firſt verſe of the former chapter, concerning wiſedomes ſeauen pillers.

Doct. 2. They that are moſt forward to ſinne are moſt terrified at the ſight of the puniſhment.

But feare, &c. They that be moſt bold and ventrous to ſinne, ſhall bee moſt frighted with the puniſhments of it. In the.14. Pſalme, the Prophet deſcribing the conceits, conuerſation, and condition of irreligious miſcreants, doth bring them in at the firſt, ſaying, that *there is no God: and therefore they corrupt and do abominable workes*. but afterwards declaring the euent, he ſheweth that *there they are taken with feare*, and as the words are, *they feared with feare*, intimating the greatneſſe of their dread and terror: Pſalm. 14.5. An example whereof we haue ſet downe before; namely, the foole-hardineſſe, and cowardlineſſe that was found in *Belſhazzer*, Dan. 5.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, the great guiltineſſe that is in their conſciences doth diſmay their hearts, and daunt their courages.

2 Secondly, the Lord doth ſhew himſelfe terrible in his iudgements, and they find & feele that they are not able to ſtand before him. And this their ſtate doth the Prophet *Iſaias* deſcribe, Chap. 33.14. *The ſinners in Zion are affraid, feare is come vpon the*

the hypocrites: who among vs shall dwell with the deuouring fire? who among vs shall dwell with the euerlasting burning?

Thirdly, their fooliſh flatterie whereby they haue illuded themſelues, hath brought this miſerie vpon them. For they preſumed of peace & ſafety, & ſo their deſtruction commeth ſuddenly without reſiſtance: 1. Theſ. 5. 3. And ſo it is ſaid in another place; *They ſhall be taken with feare, where no feare was*: that is, where was no ſuſpitiō of feare, or liklihood of dāger. Pſal. 53. 5. 3

Inſtruction: to preuent ſinne by fearing the iudgements that will enſue vpon it: as *Iob* did, euermore making this concluſion with his owne ſoule; that *deſtruction is certaine to the wicked, and ſtrange puniſhments to the workers of iniquitie*: Iob. 31. 3 Secondly, to preuent the puniſhments after that we haue ſinned, by a holy voluntary feare and humiliation: 2. Cor. 7. 11. Thirdly, to confirme our ſelues in both theſe, by feating and trembling at the word of the Lord. The practiſe whereof the Prophet *Habakuk* profeſſeth in himſelfe; *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips ſhooke at the voice, rottennеſſe entred into my bones, and I trembled in my ſelfe, that I might reſt in the day of trouble: for when he commeth vp vnto the people he ſhall deſtroy them.* Hab. 3. 16. *Vſe 1.*

Verſ. 30. *The righteous ſhall neuer be remoued: but the wicked ſhall not dwell in the earth.*

The righteous ſhall neuer be remoued. They ſhal neuer be remoued from Gods fauour; they ſhall neuer bee remoued from the conſtant graces of the Spirit in their ſoules; or hurtfully, in the way of a curſe, from an outward good eſtate; nor vnſeaſonably be cut off from the earth. Now becauſe ſome of theſe iudgements doe ſeeme ſometimes to fall vpon ſome righteous perſons, who for a ſeaſon be eclipſed of grace, & ſeparated from the fruition and comfortable ſight of Gods kindneſſe, and fauour towards them; and their eſtate in appearance is wholly ruinated and ouerthrowne: therefore the word doth well beare it, agreeably to the meaning of the holy Ghoſt, to ſay; that *the righteous ſhall not be remoued for euer.* Though they ſeeme to be caſt downe for a time, yet they ſhall be reſtored againe afterwards

wards. The contrarie is here affirmed concerning the caſe of the wicked, who ſhall certainely fall vnleſſe they repent: they ſhall not continue in that eſtate wherein they are moſt grounded, and haue greateſt eſtabliſhment: they are ſo far from enioying eternall life in heauen, as that the vengeance of God wil not permit them long to keep their owne breath, or to hold the outward poſſeſſions of the earth. The oppoſition therefore in effect is this; *The righteous ſhal neuer be remoued*, but haue an habitation for euer in heauen; but the wicked ſhall be remoued, and not ſuffered ſo much as to dwel in the earth: the ſenſe is the ſame with verſe. 25.

Verſ. 31. *The mouth of the righteous will bee fruitfull in wiſedome: but the tongue of the vnrighteous ſhall be cut out.*

THis verſe agreeth altogether in ſubſtance of matter with the eleuenth; onely the compariſon is altered: for there the tongue of a good man for the conſtant flore of holy ſpeeches, was reſembled to a plentifull fountaine; and here, to a fruitfull tree, or fertile field: and there the wicked for leaud ſpeeches, was threatned to haue his mouth ſtopped; and here to haue his tongue cut out: that is, the iudgements of God vpon him for his vngracious and curſed ſpeakings, ſhall ſtrike him as mute and dumbe, as if the tongue were cut out of his head.

Verſ. 32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked ſpeaketh froward things.*

THe meaning of theſe words is, that a righteous mā knoweth and regardeth what is beſt pleaſing to God for him to ſpeake, and what is moſt gratefull to good mē to heare: & what doth deſerue acceptation at any mans hand for faithfulnes and truth; and therefore he will vſe his lips to vtter it: but the wicked neither knoweth nor regardeth theſe things; and therefore he vomiteth out onely peruerſe ſpeeches, ſuch as tend to rebellion againſt God, the damnifying of men, and the annoyance and hurt of his owne ſelfe.

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The lips.] It is a point of godly wiſedome, for a man to ſpeake as his words may be accepted for his beſt aduantage. This appeareth by manifold examples of holy men in the Scriptures of God. Whē the Ephraimites were imbittered againſt *Gedeon*, and chid with him ſharpely; how eaſily did he ſtill them, abating their ſpirits with a milde and modeſt anſwere? Iudges 8.2. When *Dauid* was in a great rage, comming with a purpoſe to deſtroy *Nabal* and his whole family; how readily was *Abigails* mind inſtructed with vnderſtanding, and her lips prouided of prudent ſpeeches, whereby ſhee preſently pacified his diſpleaſure? 1.Sam.25.23.24. This skil alſo had *Dauid* himſelfe to win the hearts of the people, and to hold them faſt vnto him by the wiſdome of his words: yea by the force and efficacy thereof, he made the heart of bloody *Saul* his cruell and implacable enemie for a time to relent. What ſhall we ſay of *Paul*, who knew what words would draw his mortall foes to turne after a ſort to be his friends; his perſecuters to preſerue him; the Prieſts and Phariſes to ſtand for the defence of the Apoſtle of Chriſt?

Doct. He ſpeakes wiſely, whoſe words make moſt for his aduantage.

Firſt, the word and Spirit of God doth informe his ſeruants in this knowledge, and giue them diſcretion to apply themſelues to the ſtate of the perſons and ſeaſon. For that which the Prophet ſpeaketh of himſelfe, is in ſome degree verified of euerie other godly perſon, according to his place and occaſions. *The Lord hath giuen me a tongue of the learned, that I ſhould know to miniſter a word in time, to him that is weary:* Iſa.50.4.

Reaſon 1.

Secondly, the vſe and exerciſe of gracious and religious ſpeeches doth bring a dexteritie, to iudge what is moſt meete to be ſpoken, and to deliuer the ſame in the apteſt manner: and ſo (as trained ſouldiers) they are in a continuall readineſſe, vpon due occaſion, to deale with God and all ſorts of people. And therefore the Coloſſians are exhorted by the Apoſtle, to the diligent and conſtant vſe of the ſame; *Let your ſpeech be gracious alwaies, and powdred with ſalt, that ye may know how to anſwer euery man:* Col.4.6.

2

Confutation of all popiſh praiers which are offered without any aſſurance of acceptance, and conſequently it conuinceth al popiſh perſons to be vnrighteous men, becauſe they know not what.

Vſe 1.

what is acceptable: for ſo much they plainely declare, when they pronounce they know not what in a ſtrange language; when they cal vpon the dead, which heare them not at al; when they entertaine ſtrange aduocates to vſurpe Chriſt his office; when they aske things needleſſe; as the ſaluation of ſuch as are actually and abſolutely ſaued; when they aske things which are booteleſſe; as the deliuerance of ſuch as are irrecouerably damned. And their beſt apology for theſe things is; that if they doe no good, they will doe no harme: whereby they make profeſſion, that they are vncertaine whether their praiers bee like to pleaſe God, or otherwiſe be vaine and idle.

2 Reproofe, with terror for them whoſe mouthes ſpeake froward things, which may know that their words are gratefull to none but the diuell and damnable men, who wittingly & willingly, and ſpitefully with greedy deſire, do belch out ſuch bitter blaſphemies and other curſed ſpeeches, as may offend the maieſtie of God, and grieue the hearts of his children: which they doe of purpoſe, to profeſſe that they are neither ſeruants to the one, nor members of the other; but vowed enemies of both: but doe they prouoke the Lord to wrath, and not themſelues to the confuſion of their owne faces? doe they aſſault the glorious name of God, and ſtrike at him with their virulent and venomous tonges; and ſhall not be ſet vpon them, and deſtroy their ſoules and bodies with his grieuous plagues and fearefull iudgements? Euen this is a principal cauſe, together with whordome, and other ſinnes of death, that caſteth ſo many into the magiſtrates hand, and bringeth them to an ignominious end, for ſtelth, and robberies, for murthers, and moſt helliſh and abominable treaſons.

3 Conſolation to them that order their lips aright; they ſhoot not at an vncertaine marke; they may as well know how they ſhall ſpeede, as how they ſpeake, though their counſels or rebukes be not ſometimes well taken of men; yet at all times they are pleaſing to the Lord, who will alſo requite them with a glorious and bleſſed reward.

FINIS.

A